

# **Khudai Khidmatgar Movement and Its Impact upon the Frontier Tribes (1929- 1948)**



**By**

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2020**





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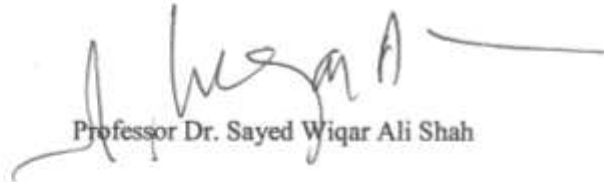
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## **Acknowledgement**

I would like to first of all thank Almighty Allah for giving me the strength to overcome various hurdles and unfavorable circumstances. However, it would not be possible to complete this research work without the guidance, support and help of many people. My supervisor occupies an important role in this regard. Therefore, I am thankful to Prof. Dr. Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah for his encouragement, guidelines and support not only during the course of my research but since 2005 when I first got admission as an MSc student at the Department of History. Besides, I must express gratitude to all my teachers, the Chairperson Dr. Rabia Umar Ali, Dr. Ilhan Niaz, Dr. Tanvir Anjum, Dr. Farooq Ahmad Dar and Dr. Razia Sultana who taught me during my stay at the Department about the importance of history and methods of undertaking historical research that benefited me in different ways. Moreover, I am thankful to my friends Dr. Amanullah Khan, Dr. Himayatullah Khan and Dr. Azmatullah Wazir who themselves have worked on the Pakhtun history and always shared their expertise whenever I needed their help for discussion.

I would also like to thank the staff of Provincial Archives at Peshawar, Pashto Academy, Bacha Khan Markaz and staff of the seminar library at the Department of History Quaid-i- Azam University Islaambad. I am also thankful to the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan which financially supported my six months stay at UK and enabled me to explore and utilize the British archival record about the study and without that my research would have been extremely difficult. Besides, my special thanks go to Jehanzeb Wazir who as Director of the International Research Support Program (IRSIP) helped me in availing the PhD fellowship for my research at UK. The staff of India Office Library at London have been very supportive and provided me all the record which I would request during my research at the UK. My



thanks also go to Dr. Markus Daechsel of Royal Holloway College London, who as my external advisor at UK extended every help and facilitated me during my research at the British Library, Royal Holloway College and School of Oriental and African Studies in London. Dr. James Caron's discussions at School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) being expert on Pakhtun history were fruitful for my research project. Finally, I am grateful to my parents and brothers, especially the prayers of my mother who always kept me in her prayers. Last though not least, I am thankful to my wife Uzma Naeem, my children, Gulalai, Salar, Breshna and Nangyalai whom I could not give enough time during the six years long journey of my PhD research and which I owe to them.

Naeemullah Khan



## Glossary

*Anjuman Islah ul Afaghina* (Society for reformations of the Afghans)

*Badal* (revenge for any insult, killing, injury or any damage)

*Dar-ul- Harb* (Land of war)

*Dar-ul- Islam* (Land of Islam)

*Dar-ul- Uloom* (place of Islamic learning/ education)

*Faqir* (ascetic)

*Fakhr-i- Afghan* (pride of the Afghans)

*Fatwa* (religious decree/ declaration or authoritative comment by a religious leader)

*Hijrat* (migration)

*Hujra* (a shared guest house)

*Jirga* (A council of decision making body in the Pakhtun society)

*Kafir* (infidel/ those who do not believe in God)

*Kashran* (young generation)

*Khairaat Khors* (beggars)

*Khans* (influential land owners/ land holders)

*Khilafat* (Caliphate or rule of the first four caliphs of Islam)

*Khudai Khidmatgar* (Servant of God)

*Lashkar* (tribal armed groups)

*Malik* (official head of a tribe or clan)

*Melmastya* (hospitality)

*Mullah* (religious cleric)

*Muhajireen* (refugees)

*Mujahideen* (holy warriors)



*Nanawatey* (forgiving those who seek it after realizing intentional or unintentional provocation against a person or tribe)

*Nang* (protecting or safeguarding ones honor)

*Paighor* (taunt)

*Pakhtunwali* (unwritten code of conduct and way of living of the Pakhtuns)

*Panah* (shelter to helpless or those who requests it)

*Raj* (literally rule but always refused to the British rule in India)

*Pir Roshan* (apostle of light)

*Roshanya* (lightening)

*Shariah* (Islamic law)

*Ulema* (religious scholars)

*Yaghistan* (no man's land)

*Zalmai Pakhtun* (young Pakhtun)

*Zalmo Jirga* (Youth League)



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\*Map of NWFP and the Adjacent Tribal Area (1901- 1947)

\* Christian Tripodi, *Edge of Empire, The British Political Officer and the Tribal Administration on the North- West Frontier: 1877-1947*, (London: Ash gate Publishing Company), 2011



## Introduction

History of the Pakhtuns living in the North- West of Pakistan shows that they have had a significant role in shaping and reshaping the South Asian history. They have inhabited the present day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the tribal areas bordering Afghanistan since medieval times and the region have been the only corridor between India and Central Asia. The strategic location of the region as a rampart of different empires has been the cause of strength and weaknesses for its inhabitants who are historically known as Afghans, Pakhtuns or Pashtoons. The study of their political struggle can be traced back in their history. This trend is evident from the fact that many Afghan (Pakhtun) dynasties like the Ghorids, Khaljis, and Lodhis although divided, have ruled successfully the Indian Subcontinent. History of the Pakhtun region is full of their military and political struggle for power. Their egalitarian nature and love for Islam have motivated persons like Sher Shah, Pir Roshan, Khushal Khan Khattak, Aimal Khan Mohmand and Darya Khan Afridi to beat the Mughals with considerable success.

Generally speaking, all the Pakhtuns share a common language, culture, traditions and social values irrespective of their geographical boundaries. They have strictly observed religious practices but customs and traditions have regulated their lives through centuries and have been preferred over *shariat* or Islamic Law. However, one of the main causes responsible for the decline of the Pakhtuns as a unified nation has been their internal factional differences and tribal jealousies. Another cause says, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the great 20<sup>th</sup> century reformer is their love for wealth. But they have never in their recorded history remained without leaders. The mighty British Indian rulers were able in exploiting the internal weaknesses and differences of the Pakhtuns living on the North Western border of present day Pakistan. Instead of bringing



reforms and modernizing the people, they further divided and ruled them under different administrative arrangements but not without troubles.

The British imperial policy was aimed at consolidating the British Indian Empire and was directed towards the North Western border of British India because they knew the strategic location of the area, the perceived threat from Czarist Russia and repercussions of a unified Pakhtun resistance. The great revolt of 1897 by the frontier tribes against the *Raj* and the religious leaders like Powinda *Mullah* (1863- 1913) in Waziristan, Sandakai *Mullah* in Malakand in the early 1890s, Fazli Wahid or Haji Sahib of Turangzai (1846- 1937) in Mohmand and Bajaur area, Mirzali Khan (1910- 1960) popularly known in history as the Faqir of Ipi also in Waziristan are few glaring examples of the militant struggle who gave tough time to the British on military front. The Faqir of Ipi in Waziristan proved as the most formidable enemy of British *Raj* who continued his anti-British militant struggle till their departure from India in 1947. The Russian threat from the North to the British interests in India was an important factor in the formulation of a different strategic policy towards the North Western border of British India and Afghanistan. As a result, the people of the area had remained backward and underdeveloped

The charismatic nonviolent leader, Abdul Ghaffar Khan (1890- 1988) realized the situation and rose up to the social, educational and political rescue of the Pakhtuns in the North West Frontier Province (renamed as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) of British India. He was an enlightened leader and knew the challenges posed by the internal tribal divisions and social evils among the Pakhtuns on the one hand and the powerful British Empire on the other. He realized that his people needed an alternative rational way of looking forward. The steps taken for educational, social and political reformation of the people and the adoption of a non violent philosophy are unique in their history. His Khudai Khidmatgar Movement (1929- 1948) gave the Pakhtuns a new line of action



in accordance with the needs of the time and led them to the path of unarmed and constitutional struggle for independence.

#### Statement of the Problem

The establishment of Azad schools in April 1921, publication of monthly journal, "*Pakhtun*" in May 1928 for socio- political and economic awareness, formation of *Zalmo Jirga* or Youth League in September 1929 and the Khudai Khidmatgar organization for accommodating all segments of the NWFP irrespective of their ethnicity and religion in November, 1929 were pragmatic attempts to bring unity among the people and make the Pakhtun customs, traditions and social values compatible with the challenges of the modern age on the one hand and to strive for independence from the British through non violent means on the other. It is also noteworthy to mention that Ghaffar Khan's aim was to reconcile the Pakhtun heroic behavior of *Tura* (sword) with the social responsibility of *Pakhtunwali* (Pakhtun code of life) as *Aql* (reason). Similarly, the Khudai Khidmatgars were organized on the pattern of an army which was similar to traditional *Lashkars* (tribal armed groups) prevalent in the Pakhtun society. However, Abdul Ghaffar Khan disarmed them and also wanted the Frontier Tribes to change their armed *Lashkars* into a nonviolent force. Interestingly, he and his comrades were not allowed to preach among the tribes but proved the British perspective of viewing the Pakhtuns as inherently violent, blood thirsty, fanatics and noble savages as wrong by their peaceful political struggle and socio-religious harmony in the Pakhtun region. He not only embarked upon social reformation of the people but also prepared them for independence with non violence. The major and immediate objectives of the movement were practical steps for promotion of education, eradication of social evils, unity of the people, promotion of Pashto literature and love for Islam. It was basically a



reform movement in the rural areas of the province and the people responded positively. However, the big Khans, *maliks* and some *mullahs* resisted it because the movement was a threat to their interests. These notables were regular beneficiaries of the British rule and were awarded with titles, *jagirs*, allowances and other favors.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan's love for freedom and unifying the people is clear from the fact that despite the ban on his entry into the semi independent tribal areas he sent various groups of Khudai Khidmatgars into the area with great risks to their lives from the British Indian authorities for preaching unity, non violence and refraining from internal tribal feuds that has been discussed in the present study. The present study is an attempt to show that the British were more apprehensive of spreading the non violent Khudai Khidmatgar movement in the tribal area whose rank and file was based on distinctive Pakhtun nationalism rather in the broader Indian context. The violent reaction of the Frontier tribes during the civil disobedience movement of 1930 was result of the collective awakening of Pakhtun historical consciousness and shared struggle against the British Imperialism in India and the Pakhtun region. That is why, the Khudai Khidmatgars if found propagating their cause in the tribal areas were given exemplary punishments and humiliated through the loyal tribal *maliks* whose economic and political interests were tied with the British rule. Despite giving no permission to the Khudai Khidmatgar leadership and workers into the tribal area, many groups were sent to Bannu, Tank, Dera Ismail Khan, Malakand Agency, Bajaur and Waziristan spending months and years among the tribes. The study of the autobiographies and memoirs of the Khudai Khidmatgars shows that the common people in the tribal areas were very receptive to their message. The pro- British *maliks* and *mullahs* were 'however' an obstacle in their way. On the other hand, the British archives at London truly recognizing the Khudai Khidmatgars as enemies of the British crown shows that



the British political officers in the tribal region made it sure that the movement did not spread to the frontier tribes despite the fact that the former have been faced with violent resistance from the later.

The Khudai Khidmatgers succeeded in spreading their non-violent freedom movement in the southern districts of NWFP and the Frontier Regions (FRs) of Bannu, Tank and Dera Ismail Khan whose people gave many sacrifices by lying hundreds of precious lives and thousands were imprisoned in various jails of British India. However, most of the Frontier tribesmen or people of the present federally administered tribal area (FATA) struggled militarily and could not comprehend the non violent approach of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement. A prominent member of the organization, Fazl ur Rahim Saqi while writing about his visits from the Peshawar Valley to the semi-independent tribes says “that the tribesmen have great love for their homeland and *Pakhtunwali*. That is why, they have remained independent. They fight for their mother land despite great poverty. The impression one gets from the day to day activities of Saqi and other Khudai Khidmatgars in the tribal areas show that the common tribesmen were poor and disunited. They did not know the dynamics of the Indian politics and political situation. The British also knew the situation and spirit of the tribes for independence and bombing or destroying their villages or forcing them to come to terms with the authorities was easy than facing another fanatic non violent movement based on Pakhtun ethnic identity. Abdul Ghaffar Khan himself have been visiting Afghanistan much before the start of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement and also motivated his only ideal Afghan Amir Amanullah Khan to give weightage to Pashto language and literature and also met various Afridi, Shinwari and Wazir tribal chiefs across the border since these tribes were divided between the British controlled tribal areas (FATA) and Afghanistan through the Durand Line drawn in 1893.



The present study tries to show that the political officers including the Frontier Governor were in favor of giving priority and representation to the All India Muslim League who represented the Muslims rather than Khudai Khidmatgars who were allies of the Hindu dominated Congress but were popular among the Pakhtuns. The local Congress dominated by the Khudai Khidmatgars won the general elections in the province when the Muslim League was unable to issue even a single party ticket to its candidate in the 1936-37 elections. After winning the elections, the British policy was aimed at keeping away the provincial government of Dr. Khan Sahib, elder brother of Abdul Ghaffar Khan from the tribal affairs despite the fact that the tribal incursions from the tribal areas in the settled districts were creating law and order situation for the popularly elected representatives in the Frontier province and the British archival sources and record clearly proves this contention. Moreover, the diaries of the British governor of the NWFP and files of his correspondence with the External Affairs Department honestly narrates the use of 'political' Islam and wide spread propaganda through the *maliks*, *mullahs* and the press not only against the Russians and Germans but also against the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier. Similarly, the Muslim League was treated friendly and favorably by the British during the second elected ministry of Dr. Khan Sahib where the Khudai Khidmatgars and its allies had won thirty three out of fifty seats in comparison to the former which succeeded in securing seventeen seats during the 1946 general elections. Moreover, the treatment meted out to Jawaharlal Nehru and Khan Brothers on their official tour of the tribal area in October 1946 at the hands of the loyal tribal *maliks* and spectacular role of the British officers during the communal propaganda of the Muslim League in the province with ninety three percent Muslims expose the dual British policy in the Frontier.



At the time of partition in 1947, the Khudai Khidmatgars were the staunch supporters of the Congress since August 1931 and had formed ministries in 1937 and 1946, were opposing the division of India on the basis of religion, boycotted the referendum in NWFP on the question of Pakistan or India. Instead of joining India, they demanded a third option of Pakhtunistan in the referendum. However, under the 3<sup>rd</sup> June Plan, the Congress leadership without consulting the Khudai Khidmatgars or the provincial Congress ministry had already agreed to the partition of India and a referendum in NWFP. After the “betrayal” of the Indian National Congress by accepting the partition plan on the basis of two nation theory and creation of Pakistan as a reality, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars had no option but to accept the new state of Pakistan by taking an oath of allegiance in the first constitutional assembly in February 1948. His recorded speeches during the constitutional debate show the real spirit of patriotism, love for social equality and democracy. However, the past affiliation of the organization with the Congress, their demand for an autonomous state of Pakhtunistan, boycotting the referendum in July 1947 and demanding maximum provincial autonomy proved disastrous for the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement since the Muslim League was not prepared to give any concession despite the fact that Khudai Khidmatgars had large number of followers and their elected ministry was dismissed within a week after the creation of Pakistan.

The new rulers of the country instead of making compromises by accommodating their valid demands branded all these freedom fighters as traitors and put them behind bars and rewarded them worst treatment than the British. However, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his group of the Khudai Khidmatgars never resorted to violence for achieving their socio- political objectives. Even demanding maximum provincial autonomy for the province was not acceptable to the new rulers who were in favor of a strong center. It is a hard reality that despite having a different



approach to political issues and grievances against the state institutions, hundreds of thousands of Abdul Ghaffar Khan's nonviolent progressive followers worked hard for the well-being of the country in general and the Pakhtun community in particular. A secular approach towards politics could have changed the country into a modern democratic and progressive state. On the contrary, a popular and non violent constitutional organization was banned and was declared as illegal in June 1948 by the provincial Muslim League ministry. Resultantly, the ill conceived policies of the bureaucratic ruling elite together with the British trained military establishment threw the Pakistani society into the grab of unending extremism and militancy.

### Importance of the study

It is true that the British policy of keeping the Frontier tribes away from the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement succeeded to a large extent because of the former oppressive policies and the opposition to the latter by the pro British *maliks* and *mullahs*. But one can not deny the fact that despite many hardships, the Khudai Khidmatgar successfully carried their message to most of the frontier tribes. Thousands of Khudai Khidmatgars were present in district Bannu, Tank, Dera Ismail Khan who unlike the tribes in the semi autonomous tribal agencies were waging a non violent struggle against the British. The British archival record at the British Library shows that the movement had spread to the far flung Datta Khel areas of North Waziristan and other tribal pockets where hundreds of uniformed tribesmen were being trained for peaceful struggle by the Khudai Khidmatgars of district Bannu and D.I. Khan. However, the British political and military officers in the agencies would crush those groups through the local paid *maliks*. The anti Khudai Khidmatgar activities of the British local authorities and their tacit support to the provincial Muslim League played a role in changing the political situation. Moreover, the *fatwas* issued by



the religious leaders further undermined the role of the Khudai Khidmatgars in the province during the crucial years of independence. Despite these hurdles and wide spread propaganda against the Hindu dominated Congress and their friends, the Khudai Khidmatgars succeeded in capturing 30 out of 50 seats during the elections of January 1946. Its allies, the Jamiat-i- Ulema-i- Hind captured 2 and Akali Dal got 1 seat while the All India Muslim League won 17 seats. It is therefore, of paramount importance to trace out the growing popularity of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement among the settled districts and to explore that why were the British not allowing them to enter the tribal areas whose people were more violent in their resistance to the British than the constitutional struggle of the former.

Apart from the peaceful struggle by thousands of Khudai Khidmatgars in the settled districts and the frontier regions (FRs) of Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Tank and Dera Ismail Khan, the independent tribes in the tribal agencies also did not tolerate the acts of oppression by the British over the non violent freedom fighters in the settled areas. Independent tribal *Lashkars* or armed groups from Waziristan, Khyber, Bajaur and Momand areas used to gather in the mountainous region of district Bannu, Kohat and Peshawar and would ambush the British battalions resulting in great physical and material losses to the British. It was not just a matter of loot and booty for the tribesmen as some scholars would like to believe. If getting wealth was the only cause of their attacks on the British Indian forces, the tribesmen could have simply joined the pro British *maliks* and *mullahs*. The British Governor of the NWFP, George Cunningham writes that not a single Hindu and Sikh was molested or killed in the tribal territory when the communal riots were at its peak after the partition of India. It was only their patriotic nature, strong bond of *Pakhtunwali* and common religion of Islam that used to motivate the tribesmen for attacking the oppressors. It is noteworthy to mention that patriotism, Pakhtun national feelings and love for



Islam were also the main objectives of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement. Due to the tribesmen's long militant resistance against the British and their isolation from the rest of the Pakhtuns in the NWFP and Afghanistan, they could not easily adopt the non violent philosophy of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and they have not been in direct contact with him as was the case with the Pakhtuns of the settled districts and the southern districts. The nonviolent constitutional struggle certainly influenced the minds of thousands of tribesmen in the areas of Kohat, Bannu, Tank and Dera Ismail Khan who resisted the British Indian government with non violent means. Moreover, the semi-independent tribes of the five political agencies also resisted the British rule militarily in response to British atrocities in the NWFP till their departure in 1947.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan was a sagacious personality and looking at the hard reality of Pakistan continued the non violent and constitutional struggle for demanding a true federal system in the country and safeguarding the rights of the people. He had adopted non violence as a creed and resigned from the Congress working committee in 1940 when the later agreed to support the British War efforts during the Second World War. Similarly, he rejected the violent decision of the Pakhtun *Zalmai* in June 1947 to have a direct violent clash with the Muslim League where his son and member of the Central Indian Legislative assembly, Abdul Ghani Khan had gathered ten to twelve thousand Pakhtun youth along with weapons at Sar-i- Daryaab, headquarters of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was not ready to have a violent clash with the Muslim league. After the creation of Pakistan in August 1947, the elected government of the Khudai Khidmatgars or the Congress ministry under Dr. Khan Sahib was dismissed within few days of independence despite the fact that the former had convinced George Cunningham that they had no intension of declaring independent Pakhtunistan or any dangerous plans for the newly emerged country. According to Cunningham, the Governor General of Pakistan, M.A.



Jinnah was not ready to be convinced by any kind of assurances of Dr. Khan Sahib about their fair play with Pakistan. Instead, Abdul Ghaffar Khan opted for the constitutional struggle and joined the first constitutional assembly at Karachi in February 1948. Unfortunately, the new rulers branded them as traitors and were thrown into various prisons for demanding complete autonomy and legitimate rights. He remained in jails for fifteen years during the first eighteen years after creation of Pakistan despite the fact that he was appreciated and embraced by M.A. Jinnah after taking the oath of allegiance in February 1948. After taking tea and a discussion with the new Governor General of Pakistan, the later was invited to Sar-i- Daryaab and to meet the Khudai Khidmatgars which was accepted. However, that did not materialize due to the role played by the provincial government under Abdul Qayyum (1901- 1981). Instead, he was asked by the governor general to dissolve the Khudai Khidmatgar organization and be a part of the Muslim League which was flatly rejected. According to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the basic difference between the Muslim League and the Khudai Khidmatgars was that the way of the former was destructive while that of the later as constructive. His continuous struggle for social, political and educational reforms has changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Pakhtuns in the NWFP and thousands others in the frontier tribes. Had the Khudai Khidmatgars not been struggled with non violence for social and political reforms during the British and later with the Muslim League, it would have been very difficult for most of the progressive Pakhtuns to co-exist and remained non violent in contemporary Pakistan due to the strategic and “Islamist” policies of the state. It is only the impact of his nonviolent philosophy and political struggle for the rights of the people that they have adopted peaceful and integrative attitude towards the state despite the latter’s biased and oppressive policy towards the former. Therefore, it is important to study the struggle and impact of the nonviolent movement upon thousands of people who have



given many sacrifices and hundreds other laid their lives in the frontier tribes for obtaining freedom but have been neglected by the scholars so far. It is equally important to study that suppressing ethnic communities by denying them their socio- political rights and supporting religious forces for evolving a common sense of identity, obtaining institutional and national interests have done much harm than any good to the country.

## **Key Questions**

Following are few pertinent questions whose answers have been explored in the present study:

- What were the historical factors that led to the formation of Khudai Khidmatgar Movement?
- Why were the British not allowing the non-violent Khudai Khidmtgars to enter the semi independent tribal areas whose people were violent against the British *Raj*?
- What steps have been taken by the Khudai Khidmatgars in spreading the non-violent philosophy of Abdul Ghaffar Khan to the Frontier tribes?
- How far this movement has succeeded in bringing a change in the socio- political and cultural life of the Pakhtuns in the region?
- Why did the new rulers of Pakistan adopt the same British tactics against the Khudai Khidmatgars instead of accommodating their valid demand of complete provincial autonomy for the smaller provinces?

## **Review of Literature**

Extensive study of all the relevant and available primary and secondary sources about the study has been made during course of the research process. Unfortunately, the history of the Khudai



Khidmatgar organization has been neglected by Pakistani scholars for many reasons partly because of the shortage of empirical data particularly its relationship and connection with the Frontier tribes or the tribal areas of NWFP (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). Very few scholars vis-à-vis Stephen Alan Rittenberg, my supervisor, Professor Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, Professor Mukulika Banerjee and few other Pakistani and South Asian scholars has worked on the subject. Apart from studying and taking help from the works of these scholars and recent Pashto and Urdu writings of the Khudai Khidmatgars, the British archival sources in the provincial archives at Peshawar and the British Library at London have been of great help in completing the present thesis.

Besides studying police, intelligence and special branch files at provincial archives in Peshawar, British official record at the British Library in London have been rigorously and critically studied for six months. Much help has been taken from the India office record particularly the private dairies of George Cunningham who remained governor of the NWFP from 1937 to 1946 and then 1947 and 1948 after the creation of Pakistan. He had also been direct in charge of the tribal areas and honestly written about the British policy, politics and activities in the Frontier. Official files pertaining to the British policies towards the frontier province and the tribes, record of the British Legation at Kabul and relationship between the British and Afghan rulers, Governor Reports and correspondence with the Viceroy about the Frontier, record of the Faqir of Ipi and Haji of Turangzai's activities, Congress and Khudai Khidmatgar activities, expeditions against the tribes and documents about the Muslim League's activities and politics kept in the Indian Office Record section of the British library have been studied much of which could not be quoted in the study. While at London, I also used to sit and discuss my research study with Dr. Markus Daechsel of Royal Holloway, Dr. James Caron and also met Professor Mukulika



Banerjee of School of Oriental and African Studies in London who are experts on the Pakhtun history and the region. Apart from discussions and analyzing the British and Khudai Khidmatgar's record, it would also be better for understanding the present study to mention few relevant books

The book entitled *Khudai Khidmatgar* written by Fazal-ur- Rahim Saqi in Pashto who himself was a prominent Khudai Khidmatgar and spent three years in Tirah, Bajaur and Momand tribal areas spreading the message of the movement explains the struggle of the Khudai Khidmatgars for the eradication of social evils from the Pakhtun society and the steps taken for independence. His other books are titled as *Zhwandoon* or *Life* and *Dha Sabr Jang* or *The Battle of Patience* also tells about the organization and various missions of the Khudai Khidmatgars to the tribal areas despite exemplary punishment given by the British political officers. However, details of the visits are missing. Abdul Ghaffar Khan's autobiography entitled *Zama Zhwand Au Jaado jehad* or *My Life and Struggle*, Khaliq's book *Dha Azaady Jang* or *The Battle for Freedom*, The four volumes book *Bacha Khan Aw Khudai Khidmatgari* or *Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Service to God* are few other worthwhile books presenting true picture of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization and Pakhtun perspective of the struggle for freedom against the British rule in India.

Stephen Alan Rittenberg's book entitled, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, published by the North Carolina Academic Press in 2016 is an authentic and valuable book based on his PhD thesis completed in 1978. The book provides first hand information about the Khudai Khidmatgar movement and the British and Muslim League policies in the Frontier. Having knowledge of the Pakhtun society, the author tries to prove that despite being part of the Congress and working for the freedom of India, the Pakhtuns kept their organizational structure and ethnic identity distinct from the people of the mainland India and worked for protecting their



regional autonomy. The book covers history of the Pakhtuns and the Khudai khidmatgars until the triumph of Muslim League in 1947. The book however, lacking in analyzing the people of the tribal areas and their inter connectedness with the Khudai Khidmatgars.

Mukulika Banerjee's work, *The Pathan Unarmed* is also a worthwhile and informative book on Ghaffar Khan and his unique non violent struggle in the history of the Pakhtuns based on direct interviews of the Khudai Khidmatgars, their personal experiences and the archival record. However, it covers only the Khudai Khidmatgars in the settled districts and does not say much about the southern districts or the Frontier tribes.

Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah's book entitled *Bacha Khan* gives scholarly and valuable insight in to the life and struggle of Ghaffar Khan and role played by the Khudai Khidmatgars for independence of the Pakhtuns from the yoke of the British. However, the details of the Khudai Khidmatgars in the tribal agencies are missing. His other books entitled *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, *Muslim League in NWFP*, *North-West Frontier Province: History and Politics* and other works in English, Urdu and Pashto languages about the Pakhtun history, land, geography and political struggle are worthwhile for all those who want to know about the Pakhtun region and their history.

Olaf Caroe's book, *The Pathans 520 B.C-A.D. 1957*, traces the history of the Frontier from the write ups of Greek historian, Herodotus and the coming of Alexander in the region to the end of British rule. The writer had been an administrator on the Frontier for many years and remained Governor of the North-West Frontier Province (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). Owing to this he has a very intimate knowledge of the people and the North-West Frontier. However, his work shows



biasness towards the Khudai Khidmatgars due to their struggle against the British and he himself was favoring the Muslim League due to their loyal service to the British.

James W. Spain's, *The Pathan Borderland* describes the history, land, people and way of life of the *Pakhtuns*. The interest of the writer in the *Pakhtun* people motivated him to become a historian from an easy going life of diplomat. However, outsiders cannot understand the Pakhtun society and their psyche in a proper way. The earlier writings about the Pakhtuns reflect biasness of the writers due to freedom struggle of the people against imperialism.

*Politics of Identity: Ethnic Nationalism and the State in Pakistan* by Adeel Khan is an interesting book about the British policies in India and how did the founders of Pakistan continue the same centralized bureaucratic system after independence instead of making the country a true federal state. It mentions all the ethnic movements within Pakistan and the repressive policies of the state for silencing the voices of provincial autonomy by the smaller provinces. However, it does not cover the activities of the Khudai Khidmatgars in detail.

Above all, the personal diaries and reports of George Cunningham who served as Governor of the NWFP from 1937 to 1946 and then as Governor of the province under the Pakistani government in 1947 and 1948 at the India Office Record section of the British Library in London proved very fruitful for analyzing the British interests and policy in the North- West Frontier of India. He has mostly and honestly written about politics in the NWFP and the British policy towards the Frontier tribes. The files, reports and diaries clearly shows biasness of the British Indian rulers towards the Khudai Khidmatgar organization in the province for protecting their own political interests in the region since the later was bitterly against British rule in the Pakhtun region. Similarly, the official record about activities of the Faqir of Ipi in Waziristan, propaganda



of the Khudai Khidmatgars and Muslim League in the tribal territory, resistance in the tribal areas and British Legation at Kabul was of great help in successfully completing the present study.

## **Methodology**

The study deals with the socio- political situation in the North West Frontier region of British India in a systematic way by analyzing all available and accessible primary and secondary sources. The archival record and new sources written by the active members of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement has been critically analyzed since the British officials have viewed the struggle of the indigenous people by using their own Imperial interests and European civilizational standards while the later has looked at the British as oppressors. A critical study has been undertaken by exploring both sides of the story. The aim of the research is to make good use of the existing data and literature and interpreting it rationally to generate wisdom about the subject in question. Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* has been followed for the research.

## **Organization of the Study**

The present research study is comprised of an Introduction, six chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter "*History of the North West Frontier of India and the adjacent Frontier Tribes (1849- 1901)*" discusses the land, people and socio-political history of the Pakhtuns living in the broader context of Northern India. The chapter analyzes the British occupation of the North West Frontier and its independent tribal territories, establishment of tribal agencies and its relationship



with India and Afghanistan. The separation of five settled districts from the Punjab and making of North West Frontier Province is also in the scope of this chapter.

The second chapter entitled, “*Political Conditions in the NWFP and Emergence of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement (1901- 1929)*” deals with political activities in the province under the British rule, travels of Ghaffar Khan to the tribal territory of Mohmand and Bajaur tribal agencies from 1910 to 1919 and also to answer the question as to why the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement started and spread in the districts instead of the tribal area? This chapter explains the events leading to the emergence of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization, its ideology, leadership, party politics, internal differences between the Khudai Khidmatgar leadership and steps taken by Ghaffar Khan for the socio-political and educational uplift of the people.

The third chapter “*The civil disobedience movement (1930- 1934) and its Impact upon the Tribal Areas*” discusses the start of the civil disobedience by the Indian National Congress in India and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier, indiscriminate killings of the peaceful Khudai Khidmatgar and Congress protesters in Peshawar, Kohat and Bannu, its impact on tribal territory in the form of an armed resistance by the tribes, the Afridi retaliation by attacking Peshawar and subsequent occupation of the Kajuri Maidan in Khyber agency by the British. The activities of the Khudai Khidmatgars of district Bannu and D.I. Khan in the Frontier tribes and the attacks of the tribal *Lashkars* in Mohmand, North and South Waziristan in response to the British oppression during the civil disobedience also comes in the scope of this chapter. The circumstances and affiliation of the movement with the Congress has also been discussed in this chapter.



The fourth chapter entitled as, “*British Policies towards the Tribal Area and its impact on the Settled Areas of NWFP (1935-1939)*” explains the British post 1935 forward policy in the tribal territory and its criticism by the Khudai Khidmatgar and Congress leadership, violent resistance from the tribesmen under the leadership of the Faqir of Ipi and its impact on the settled areas of NWFP in the form of targeting British installations in district Bannu and D.I. Khan and increase in kidnapping the minorities either for releasing the prominent tribal elders or taking ransom that not only led to the communalization of politics in the province but also created law and order situation for the new Congress government in the Frontier. The basic argument of this chapter is that the British forward moves and indiscriminate bombing of common villages forced the Faqir of Ipi to retaliate by attacking the settled districts because owing to the large number of troops in the center of Waziristan having sophisticated weapons and manpower, it was difficult for the tribes to confront the British in Waziristan. The tribal retaliation in the form of attacking the districts in response to the British presence and forward moves has also been acknowledged by the British governor and direct in charge of the tribes, George Cunningham. The same forward policy was criticized by the Congress, the Khudai Khidmatgars and the bombing of villages was even criticized by members of the parliament in England as shown by the British record kept at the India Office Library, London.

The fifth chapter “*War Years (1939- 1945)*” deals with the changing British policies in the Frontier and tribal area and wide spread religious propaganda through newspapers and *mullahs* against the Soviet Russia and the Axis powers since it was assumed by the British policy makers and strategists that the foreign threat to India was from the North-West rather than the East. The Muslim League leaders fully supported the British war efforts and extended every help in spreading the religious propaganda in the province. The propaganda was not only against the



foreign enemies but also against the Congress and their friends, the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier. On the contrary, the Khudai Khidmatgars sent various delegations to the tribal agencies for preaching unity among the people against the British *Raj* and minimizing their war efforts trying to keep it away from distant wars and militarization. Interestingly, the Afghan rulers also played a pro-British and pro-Muslim League approach in minimizing the influence and propaganda of the Khudai Khidmatgars in the tribal area.

The sixth chapter “*Towards the Partition of India: Politics in the Frontier and the Tribal Areas (1946- 1948)*” analyzes the events that led to the partition of India, elections of 1946 and the Congress victory, visit of Jawaharlal Nehru to the tribal areas as head of the new interim government along with Khan Brothers and its sabotaging by the British political officers along with the Muslim League sympathizers. Finally, the Muslim League campaign for Pakistan and its civil disobedience against Dr. Khan Sahib’s ministry in the Frontier, visit of Lord Mountbatten to the Frontier and the 3<sup>rd</sup> June Plan, demand of Pakhtunistan by the Khudai Khidmatgars and accession of the province to the new state through a referendum, inclusion of the tribal territory in to the Pakistani federation and continuation of the old repressive policies and banning of the Movement in 1948 has been discussed in detail.



## Chapter One

### History of the North West Frontier of India and the adjacent Frontier Tribes

The North Western border region of British India or the present day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan and the adjacent Tribal Areas known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) has played a significant role in the history of Indian sub-continent. It has been the land of light and shade, of viscosities and contradictions, of affection and hatred, of danger and tragedy, of romance and reality.<sup>1</sup> The province is bounded by Hindu Kush range in the north. Baluchistan province lies to its South. To its east lies the province of Punjab and Kashmir. The Durand Line separates it from Afghanistan in the west. The settled districts of the Frontier and its adjacent tribal areas have remained part of bigger areas what we call as Hindustan and Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup> The people of this region have been socially and culturally close to the people living in Afghanistan due to their common origin, language, culture and religion.

The region has been occupied by the Pakhtuns since medieval times who were engaged with India for economic and political reasons. While fifty six per cent of the people in the settled districts of the Frontier region spoke Pashto, the entire population of its tribal areas was Pakhutns.<sup>3</sup> According to the 1941 census report, the tribal territories before departure of the British covered an area of 25, 000 square miles including the princely states of Dir, Swat and Chitral with an estimated population of 2,377,599 persons. The settled districts covered an area

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<sup>1</sup> Pyarelal, *A Pilgrimage for Peace: Gandhi and Frontier Gandhi Among N. W. F. Pathan*, (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1950), 1

<sup>2</sup> For details see Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationnalism*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 3-9

<sup>3</sup> Ibid;



of 14,263 square miles with a population of 3,038,067.<sup>4</sup> The total estimated area of the province including the tribal area is 39,900 square miles.<sup>5</sup> However, the princely states and Malakand region has been merged with the Frontier province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) after the creation of Pakistan and the remaining area of the tribal territory has become 27220 Square kilo meter or 3.4 percent of Pakistan's total land area.<sup>6</sup> The total population of the remaining tribal area or FATA according to 1981 census is 21, 99,000 persons.<sup>7</sup> The population rose to 2.8 million in 1998 which does not seem to be accurate. Currently, the population is unofficially estimated to be more than seven million. The Pakhtuns of the region are probably the largest tribal society living in the world.<sup>8</sup>

The people have lived in the area for centuries. Due to its strategic location, the area has been overrun by all the conquerors that came to India from Central Asia. In the process, the inhabitants of the region have reacted differently according to the situations of the time. While the socio- political conditions and economic considerations have led them to support and assist the invaders, the same people have resisted those invaders on their own homeland due to their love for independence. For instance, they have had helped the Mughal emperor Zahir ud Din Muhammad Babur in 1526 in his conquest of India but were his staunch enemies on their own land. Similarly, the successors of Babur were continuously threatened by the Pakhtun religious cum nationalist leaders.

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<sup>4</sup> Abdul Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns on the Pathan Frontier*, (Bombay: Hind Kitabs Publishers, 1945), 5 see also, Mohammad Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, (Bombay: Hind Kitabs Ltd, 1947), 58-59, Lal Baha, *NWFP Administration Under British Rule: 1901-1919*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1978), 2

<sup>5</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, 1

<sup>6</sup> *1998 Census Report of FATA*, (Islamabad: Population Census Organization, Statistic Division, Government of Pakistan, December 2001), 1.

<sup>7</sup> Sayed Iftekhar Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes along the Pak-Afghan Border*, (Peshawar: Area Study Centre, 2000), 7

<sup>8</sup> J. W. Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, (Karachi: Indus Publications, 1963), 17



The Roshaniya Movement started by Bayazid Ansari (1525- 1581), a religious leader from South Waziristan started his struggle against the Mughal emperor Akbar that lasted for a century. Similarly, Khushal Khan Khattak, Aimal Khan Mohmand and Darya Khan Afridi gave tough time to Aurangzeb Alamgir who was compelled to come in person and face the Pakhtun threat in the North West Frontier region. Despite their continuous resistance, the Mughals were able to have a nominal control of the settled districts as far as the Khyber Pass and Bannu. The present capital of Afghanistan, Kabul also formed one of the initial provinces conquered by the Mughals and was part of the Mughal empire.

After the decline of the Mughals, the region was made part of the Durrani Empire by Ahmad Shah Abdali (1722- 1772) who was the founder of present day Afghanistan. His successors proved incompetent shortly for protecting the Durrani Empire and the settled districts of the Frontier dominated by the Pakhtuns came under the Sikh empire of Ranjit Singh in 1818. Finally, the British after defeating the Sikh ruler in 1849 kept the settled areas as part of the Punjab till 1901.<sup>9</sup> The mighty British empire adopted different methods of controlling and administering the region for strategic and political reasons. They separated the settled districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan from the Punjab in 1901 thereby creating a separate province namely the North West Frontier. Instead of bringing together the settled districts and the adjacent tribal territory, the British further divided it into five semi autonomous tribal agencies of Malakand Agency (which includes the princely states of Dir, Swat and Chitral), Khyber Agency, Kurram Agency, North and South Waziristan Agencies giving them a semi autonomous status. Mohmand, Bajaur and Orakzai agencies were later created by Pakistan in 1951 and 1973 respectively.

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<sup>9</sup> Lal Baha, *NWFP Administration under British Rule: 1901-1919*, pp. 4-5



Being part of different empires for a long time, necessity of governance by outsiders and socio-political activism, the Pakhtuns of the settled areas developed differently than the mountainous tribal areas which had remained isolated from the outside world due to its inaccessible terrain, unruly nature of the people and less revenue sources. Moreover, the Frontier tribes living in the tribal area have been divided on tribal lines and never got united under a single leader for a common political objective.<sup>10</sup> Resultantly, the Pakhtuns of the five settled districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan and the Frontier tribes adopted two different modes of struggles against the British Imperial forces in the region and developed differently. The difference between their geographical positions and historical experiences shaped the thinking patterns and actions of the people. While the people of the settled districts under the changed circumstances succeeded in developing an alternative non violent and constitutional movement under the leadership of Abdul Ghaffar Khan against the mighty British Empire, the tribesmen under different religious leaders continued their historical armed resistance against the British till their departure from India in 1947.

The reason behind the Pakhtun's resistance to the British rule in India was their intense passion for liberty and independence.<sup>11</sup> The ultimate aim of both the constitutional struggle of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement developed in the districts and the armed resistance of the frontier tribes was resisting the British rule with different strategies. The centuries old socio political and economic environment in the plain and hilly areas has played a major role in shaping the character and behavior of the people of both the areas.<sup>12</sup> Understanding the first ever non-violent Khudai Khidmatgar movement among the Pakhtuns of the North West Frontier Province and its

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<sup>10</sup> Andrew, C. F, *The Challenge of the North West Frontier: A contribution to World Peace*, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, nd), 57

<sup>11</sup> Ibid; 64

<sup>12</sup> Ibid;



impact upon the adjacent frontier tribes, one needs to study the long history of its inhabitants, variations between the geographical positions of the areas, socio- political and economic conditions of the people, the British administrative policies towards the region in its proper context. A brief history of the Pakhtuns, arrival of various conquerors and resistance by the local population can help us to understand the situation that shaped the character and behavior of the Pakhtuns in the settled areas of the North West Frontier region and its adjacent tribal territory.

### **1.1 Origin of the Pakhtuns/ Afghans**

Historically, the word Afghan has been used by the Persians and English writers for the people living in present day Afghanistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, tribal areas, parts of the Punjab, Sindh and indeed the whole of India.<sup>13</sup> It was firstly used during the Indian invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni in 1001 AD.<sup>14</sup> Most of the Pakhtuns living in the present day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the tribal areas have in the course of history migrated from the areas of present Afghanistan along with the conquerors from Central Asia. The famous Greek historian, Herodotus and other ancient documents have described the people living on both sides of the Durand Line between Pakistan and Afghanistan as *Pakhtyne* (Pakhtun).<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the vast majority of the people living in the North-West Frontier of British India proudly call themselves as Pakhtun or Pashtoon. In the context of India and colonial ethnography, the people are known as Pathans which is actually the corruption of the word Pakhtun. Looking at the area and its people under the present research study, the word Pakhtun is being used in the thesis instead of Afghan in order to avoid confusion.

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<sup>13</sup> John C Griffith, *Afghanistan*, (New York: Frederick A. Prager, 1967), 7

<sup>14</sup> Spain, *The Way of the Pathans*, 30.

<sup>15</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 8



The origin of the Pakhtuns, Pashtoons or Afghans remained unclear and unresolved issue. Various scholars have described them as Aryans, Jews, and followers of Hazrat Ibrahim, Sulimanis and Albanians.<sup>16</sup> However, three theories are more important and widely recognized by historians about the origin of the Pakhtuns. The first theory presented is the Bani Israelite theory that traces and links Pakhtuns with Israel. The second theory describes the people as Aryans with their birthplace as Bakhtar (present Afghanistan) between Pamirs and Oxus.<sup>17</sup> The third most scientific theory describes the Pakhtuns as a mixed race.

The first attempt was made by Naimat ullah Harvi in his book, *Tarikh-i- Khan Jahan Lodhi wa Makhzan-i- Afghani*. The book was written to counter the Mughal propaganda against the lineage of the Afghans or Pakhtuns.<sup>18</sup> Naimat ullah, the secretary of Khan Jahan Lodhi was asked to collect history of the Pakhtuns. He sent his five servants to the Pakhtun territories for the purpose. The information they collected from the people led them to describe the Pakhtuns as a family of Israel.<sup>19</sup> They maintained that after expulsion of the tribe from their own land Jerusalem by Bakhtnassar (Nebuchadnasser) took refuge in Ghor (place in Afghanistan).<sup>20</sup> After their increase in number, they started attacking nearby areas and succeeded in capturing Kabul, Kandahar, Ghazni. Khalid Bin Walid who was a great general in the early period of Islam belonged to same tribe of Israel as the Pakhtuns.<sup>21</sup> He informed and invited them about the last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). A group of Pakhtuns in the leadership of Qais reached Arabia, held deliberations with the Prophet and accepted Islam.<sup>22</sup> After their departure, the prophet

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<sup>16</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *North-West Frontier Province: History and Politics*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2007), 1

<sup>17</sup> D.G. Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan: Faith is a Battle*, (New Delhi: Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1967), 2

<sup>18</sup> Himayatullah Yaqubi, *Mughal Afghan Relations in South Asia: History and Developments*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2015), 4

<sup>19</sup> Shah, *North-West Frontier Province: History and Politics*, 2 See also Spain, J. W. *The Way of the Pathans*, 29

<sup>20</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 8

<sup>21</sup> Qazi Attaullah Khan, *Da Pukhtano Tareekh*, (Pashto), (Peshawar: University Book Agency, 2004), 7

<sup>22</sup> Ibid;



addressed the group as “Haza Batany Deen” (Batan means rudder of a ship). However, Khushal Khan Khattak, the seventeenth century Pakhtun warrior poet has said that the word Batan was given to them by Mehmud Ghaznavi due to their courageous deeds in the battle of Somanath.<sup>23</sup> Khalid Bin Walid gave his daughter in marriage to Qais and became a father of three sons namely Ghorghasht, Baitan and Saraban.<sup>24</sup> Many historians have given their arguments in favor of the theory. Various names like the Daudzai, Yousafzai and Musakhel etc of the Pakhtuns resemble with the Hebrew names. Similarities are found between *Pakhtunwali* (unwritten law of the Pakhtuns) and laws of the Prophet Moses to his people. Qazi Attaullah Khan states that when king Nadir Shah of Persia arrived in Peshawar, he was presented with a Manuscript of Bible which was written in Hebrew language.<sup>25</sup> He further says that all the Pakhtun tribes accepted Islam within the span of forty years with the help of an Arab messenger sent along with the Afghan group by the Prophet of Islam.<sup>26</sup>

It is not easy to accept or reject a theory.<sup>27</sup> Various writers and scholars contradict the Bani Israelite theory about the origin of the Pakhtuns. There are many questions that can challenge this theory. No one has told about whether the Pakhtuns of Ghor were practicing Judaism before their conversion to Islam? How many Jews so far have abandoned their faith? <sup>28</sup> Did the whole race change their religion and language? Olaf Caroe states that all Muslim traditions show that Khalid Bin Walid was from Bani Makhzum branch of the Quraysh and that the resemblance found in the names of the Pakhtuns and Jews is probably due to the Arab influence in the Indo-

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<sup>23</sup> Shah, *North-West Frontier Province: History and Politics*, 7

<sup>24</sup> Niaz Ahmad, *Niamatullah's History of the Afghans: Makhzani Afghani*, (Lahore: Sange-e- Meel Publications, 2002), 8

<sup>25</sup> Qazi Attaullah. *Da Pukhtano Tareekh*, 7

<sup>26</sup> Ibid;

<sup>27</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 7

<sup>28</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, “Origin of the Afghans: Myth and Reality”, *Journal of Asian Civilizations*, (Islamabad), Vol., 37, No, 1, (July 2014), 189-196.



Afghan region.<sup>29</sup> The well known orientalist, M. Raffin considers them as having originated from Albanians of Asia who were expelled from one extremity of Persia to the other as far as Khurasan and were known by the name of *Aughan*.<sup>30</sup>

Another important theory about their origin is the Aryan race theory and is supported by large number of historians. According to it, the northern hills of Afghanistan and the frontier region were penetrated between two and three thousand years ago by the adventurous groups of Aryans after leaving their original homes in search of food, plunder and developing kingdoms.<sup>31</sup> They were pastoral people and full of spirit for adventure. Exact nature of the migration is not known. However, Professor Muller has asserted that their first division was between the European and Asiatic groups. Historians differ on their original birthplace. Some considers them as northern Europeans while others trace their origin to the southern territories of Russia.<sup>32</sup> The recent research has showed it somewhere a place between the Oxus and Pamirs which is known as Bakhtar (present day Afghanistan). One of the group which is known as Indo- Aryan crossed the Hindu Kush and reached Swat and Indus River. They crossed the Indus and settled in Punjab and reached the valleys of Ganga and Jumna.<sup>33</sup> They subjugated the original inhabitants, the Dravidians who migrated to other parts of India. When two layers of the Aryans from Bakhtar had migrated, the remaining were known as the Central or Bakhtar Aryans.<sup>34</sup> According to the historians, these central or Bactrian Aryans were the ancestors of the Pakhtuns.<sup>35</sup> They had settled in the areas of Balkh, Herat, Kabul and Gandhara and gave it the name of Aryana.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans 550 BC-AD 1957*, (London: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1958), 5-7

<sup>30</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 7

<sup>31</sup> Ibid; 3

<sup>32</sup> Shah, *North-West Frontier*, 4

<sup>33</sup> Yunus, 7

<sup>34</sup> Shah, *North-West Frontier*, 5

<sup>35</sup> Shah, "Origin of the Afghans, 194

<sup>36</sup> Baqi Durrani, *Pukhtanh Da Tehzeeb Pa Sapo Key*, (Pashto), (Quetta: Sahaf Publishers, 2008), 72



The Rig Veda was probably composed when the Aryans migrated to the Frontier region and parts of the Punjab.<sup>37</sup> The *hymns* of Rig Veda, clearly indicated the rivers Sindhu (Indus), Kuruma (Kurram), Kubha (Kabul), Gumati (Gomal), Suvustu (Swat) and other rivers of the region.<sup>38</sup> According to the famous Greek historian, Herodotus, the people of the area were *Pakhtyne* Buddhists.<sup>39</sup> Bahadar Shah Zafar agrees that Pashto joined hands with the Aryan group of languages. The Aryans were white and of fair complexion free from diseases which are common in the Afghans.<sup>40</sup> No one of the supporters of the Bani Israelite theory of the Pakhtuns has told about the time and history of the eastwards migration of the Jews from Palestine to the areas of present day Afghanistan. On the other hand, it is clear and widely accepted that the Aryans came down from Central Asia in successive waves and passing through the Pakhtun region entered Punjab and spread throughout India.<sup>41</sup>

Another group of historians has presented the scientific mixed race theory.<sup>42</sup> Fraser Tytler has argued in favor of this theory. According to him, the Pakhtuns are Aryans by origin but have intermixed merged with different elements of Turkish, Mongol and other strains penetrated into them.<sup>43</sup> Charles Miller has supported him by adding that they had been on the scene for centuries and the invading forces like the Greeks, Turks, Mongols and others contributed to the racial elements of the Afghan stock.<sup>44</sup> The renowned Pashto poet, philosopher and member of Indian Legislative Council, Abdul Ghani Khan also considers the Pakhtuns as a mixture of all those races that came to India from Central Asia. He asserts that the Persians, Greeks, Turks and

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<sup>37</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 7

<sup>38</sup> Shah, *North-West Frontier Province*, 5

<sup>39</sup> Yunus, 8

<sup>40</sup> Shah, *North-West Frontier*, 5

<sup>41</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 18

<sup>42</sup> Yaqubi, Himayatullah. *Mughal Afghan Relations in South Asia*, 5

<sup>43</sup> Shah, "Origin of the Afghans", 195

<sup>44</sup> Spain, 29



Mongols have added their own characteristics to the Pakhtun society and blood.<sup>45</sup> Professor Dorn of Kharkov University was a great Pashto scholar who has translated many Pashto books in to Russian language suggests that it is very difficult to draw a rational conclusion from the facts that are available.<sup>46</sup> He can not find any other place beyond the present areas of the Pakhutns.<sup>47</sup> Over the ages of time they have absorbed different dynasties.<sup>48</sup> The arguments put forward logically by the historians lead us to the conclusion that the Pakhutns are Aryans by blood but the invaders and conquerors passing through the region have left permanent imprints thereby contributing to the diversified nature and characteristics of the Pakhtuns throughout the region. The Pakhtuns of the tribal areas are considered as more pure than their brothers in the plains due to the hilly and inaccessible terrain of the area.<sup>49</sup>

## **1.2 Socio- Political History and Pattern of Resistance in the North West Frontier**

Before coming to the British annexation of the North West Frontier and its adjacent tribes, an eye bird look at the socio- political history of the people can help us in understanding the development of different political approaches for achieving freedom and the formulation of different administrative policies by the former and the modes of resistance by the later. The plain or settled districts have been part of different empires and developed differently than the mountainous tribal areas inhabited by the Pakhtun tribes due to unruly nature of the people, less revenue chances and inaccessibility of the area to the foreign invaders. The plain areas of the North West Frontier which became a separate province in 1901 have been brought under some kind of loose governance.<sup>50</sup> The frontier tribes have only proved as an entrance to the mainland

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<sup>45</sup> Ghani Khan, *The Pathans*, (Peshawar: University Book Agency, nd), 2-5

<sup>46</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 8

<sup>47</sup> Ibid;

<sup>48</sup> Spain, *The Way of the Pathans*, 29

<sup>49</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali. *North-West*, 7

<sup>50</sup> Spain, *The Way of the Pathans*, 34.



India, but difficult to govern and less attractive to the foreign invaders. Moreover, the tribes have never accepted any kind of foreign rule and charged all the invaders for crossing their passes. Being a straddle between India and Central Asia, the Pakhtuns have been overrun by the conquerors over the course of history.

The boundaries of the North West Frontier have changed with the passage of time. During the Aryan period, the North West frontier of India was extended from the Indus to the far away tracts in Central Asia.<sup>51</sup> Starting from 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, it has remained part of the Persian, the Greek, the Mauryan, the Scythia, the Kushan, the White Huns the Guptas, the Turk, the Mughals and Durrani empires till 1818.<sup>52</sup> In the process, the new settlers have been intermixed with the local population and became a center of different cultures and civilizations.<sup>53</sup> The tribes in the hilly areas have however remained less influenced by the conquerors that passed through the Passes they occupy.

The Persian Monarch, Darius invaded and conquered Kabul and the areas surrounding the river Indus in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>54</sup> Two centuries later, Alexander overran the same hills by passing through the Khyber, Swat and Malakand and reached beyond Jehlum.<sup>55</sup> The Khyber was then occupied as it is now held by the same Afridi tribe or 'Aparioetae' as called by the Greeks.<sup>56</sup> Afterwards, King Asoka founded a great empire and the frontier areas remained part of the Buddhist faith and culture.<sup>57</sup> The Greek historian, Herodotus has described that the grand father of Asoka, Chandragupta was wandering round Swat at the time of Alexander invasions.<sup>58</sup> The presence of great statues of Buddha, stupas, monasteries, settlements from river Indus to Hindu

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<sup>51</sup> Pyarelal, "A Pilgrimage for Peace, 3

<sup>52</sup> Ibid;

<sup>53</sup> Himayatullah. *Mughal Afghan Relations*, 7

<sup>54</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 8

<sup>55</sup> Griffiths, *Afghanistan*, 9

<sup>56</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 8

<sup>57</sup> Yunus, *Frontier*, 8

<sup>58</sup> Ibid;



Kush and the recent excavation of hundreds of historical sites in Swat, Peshawar, Takhtbai, Bajaur and North Waziristan proves that it has been a great seat of learning and civilization. Many dynasties after establishing their empires crossed the frontier region and all of them perished with the passage of time. The areas surrounding Peshawar valley formed part of northern India under the Hindu ruler, Raja Jaipal who was ultimately defeated by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1001.<sup>59</sup> The Pakhtuns of the region are believed to be the followers of Buddhism and Hinduism at that time.<sup>60</sup>

The Arab invasions of the region had started during the third caliph of Islam, Hazrat Usman. Abdullah Ibn Aamir, the governor of Khurasan undertook military expeditions of Ghazni and Hilmand (in Afghanistan) but faced difficulties in subduing the people. By 977 AD, the Turkish slave king of Balkh and Ghazni, Subaktagin started the invasion of India. Many Pakhtuns started embracing Islam and joined the invading armies.<sup>61</sup> In the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Frontier tribes initially resisted Mahmud but he ultimately overcame and succeeded in making allies who supported his invasions of India and Central Asia.<sup>62</sup> The Pakhtuns embraced Islam in large numbers during the rule of Mahmud of Ghazni.<sup>63</sup> They accompanied his army in the invasions of India. Some of them have settled permanently in different parts of India.

After the decline of the Ghaznavid empire, an Afghan ruler, Shahab-ud- Din Ghorī established his rule in India that lasted for centuries under different dynasties. Throughout the rule of these dynasties, the North West Frontier region, Afghanistan and the whole of Northern India seems to have formed one single empire. During all these invasions many Pakhtun tribes migrated and

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<sup>59</sup> Himayatullah, *Mughal Afghan Relations*, 5

<sup>60</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 9

<sup>61</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 9

<sup>62</sup> Yunus, 15

<sup>63</sup> Baqi, *Pukhtanh Da Tehzeeb Pa Sapo Key*, 117



settled in the NWFP, Punjab, Sindh and parts of India.<sup>64</sup> In fact, many Pakhtun leaders of the region although divided among themselves ruled the areas that constitute the present day Afghanistan, Pakistan and India for many years.

The Mughals have been resisted and considered as enemies of the Pakhtuns for overthrowing the Lodhi and Suri dynasties in India.<sup>65</sup> The last ruler of Delhi Sultanate, Ibrahim Lodhi was a Pakhtun defeated near Delhi by the Mughal emperor Babur in 1526. While some of the Pakhtun tribes such as Yousafzai helped Babur in establishing Mughal rule in India, thousands others fought against the Mughals under Pir Roshan, Khushal Khan Khattak, Aimal Khan Mohmand and Darya Khan Afridi. Pir Roshan and his Roshanya Movement tried to unify the Pakhtun tribes from South Waziristan to Chitral against the Mughal emperor Akbar and their struggle lasted for a century.<sup>66</sup> The religious-cum political leader, Bayazid Ansari (1526- 1581) popularly known as Pir Roshan being settled in Dawar area of North Waziristan unified and gathered thousands of Wazir, Mehsud, Bangash, Orakzai, Mohmand, Muhammadzai, Gaygyani and Afridi tribesmen against the Mughals. Akbar's famous generals Birbal and Man Singh did not succeed and he decided to come in person along with a large army and stationed in Attock.<sup>67</sup> Thousands of Mughal troops as well as the Roshanites were killed in many battles between the Mughals and the Pakhtuns. The Yousafzai tribe under Kalu Khan also attacked the Mughal army near district Buner in 1587 that killed Akbar's famous general Birbal along with his 8000 troops in a single encounter.<sup>68</sup> However, the struggle of the Pakhtuns in the tribal territory as well as the settled areas was not a unified struggle for getting a common political objective.

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<sup>64</sup> Qazi Attaullah. *Da Pukhtano Tareekh*, 29-37

<sup>65</sup> Stephen Alan Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement in India's North- West Frontier, 1901- 1947", Unpublished PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Political Science, (University of Columbia, 1977), 28

<sup>66</sup> Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar, *Rokhanyan Da Mughalo Tarikyaan*, Pashto, (Peshawar: Idara Ishahat- i- Sarhad, 1966), 8

<sup>67</sup> Ibid; 33

<sup>68</sup> Himayatullah. *Mughal Afghan Relations*, xix



After the death of Bayazid, his successors and followers carried out the struggle against the Mughal rule on their own land. *Akbar Nama* tells the number of the Roshanite Pakhtuns as 25000 fighters.<sup>69</sup> Akbar sent a large army under Asif Khan and Zain Khan to assist the governor of Kabul, Muhammad Qasim Khan in 1592 to kill Bayazid's son in Tirah. The combined forces of the three marched towards Tirah and attacked Jalal and his *Lashkar*. Although, Jalal was forced to leave Tirah but the Mughal forces killed more than 14000 persons including women and children.<sup>70</sup> Jalal gathered large *Lashkar* (war party) and attacked the Mughal forces several times in Ghazni, Nangarhar (in present day Afghanistan), Kohat, and Peshawar and was later killed by Hazaras near Ghazni.<sup>71</sup> Jalal's nephew and son in law, Ahdad continued his anti Mughal struggle and was killed by the Mughal army near Kohat in 1626 under Pakhtun commanders Taj Khan, Sher Khan and Nand Ali Khan. Emperor Jehangir was in Kabul and he celebrated his death and ordered that his head should be hanged with a wall in Lahore fort.<sup>72</sup> The struggle between the Mughals and the Pakhtuns though divided among themselves continued till the end of Aurangzeb's rule in the region.

While some of the Pakhtuns in the settled areas of the NWFP were part of the Mughal empire for personal gains and favors thousands others were their staunch enemies and played active part in the disintegration of the Mughals. For instance, Khushal Khan Khattak, the Pashto warrior poet of the seventeenth century, Aimal Khan Mohmand and Darya Khan Afridi tried their best to unify the Pakhtuns. Surprisingly, his own son Baihram Khan was in the Mughal camp against their father.<sup>73</sup> On the other hand, Khushal Khan Khattak was supported by the Afridi and

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<sup>69</sup> Akbar, *Rokhanyan Da Mughalo Tarikyaan*, 44

<sup>70</sup> Ibid; 47

<sup>71</sup> Himayatullah. *Mughal Afghan Relations*, 134

<sup>72</sup> Ibid;

<sup>73</sup> Robert Nichols, *Settling the Frontier: Land, Law and Society in the Peshawar Valley, 1500-1900*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 39



Mohmand tribes in the struggle against Aurangzeb. Mughal installations were regularly attacked and the Khyber Pass between Kabul and Delhi was blocked for the Mughal's communication.

In May 1672, the Afridi tribesmen under the leadership of Aimal Khan attacked the Mughal troops near Ali Masjid and killed 10, 000 soldiers, captured 20,000 men and women including the mother, wife and daughter of Kabul's governor.<sup>74</sup> The whole Pakhtun region from Attock to Qandahar was in revolt against the Mughals.<sup>75</sup> In the encounters between the Pakhtun leaders of the frontier and the Mughals, thousands of people lost their lives from both sides.<sup>76</sup> Sensing the general mass uprising and defeats of the Mughal generals, Aurangzeb was forced to tackle the frontier revolt in person and reached Hasan Abdal in April 1674. He succeeded in bringing peace through bribes, favours and giving jagirs to his loyalists. Throughout the Mughal rule in the frontier region, the Pakhtun resisted them militarily and their rule was confined to the forts and garrisons in the settled areas of the North West Frontier. Aurangzeb practically left them as independent as the Pakhtuns in the tribal areas.<sup>77</sup>

After the disintegration of the Mughal empire, Ahmad Shah Abdali who himself was a Durrani Pakhtun from Qandahar (Afghanistan), succeeded in creating an extended Afghan Empire from river Oxus to the Indus river in 1747 after the murder of Persian King, Nadir Shah the same year. The North West Frontier was made part of the Afghan empire.<sup>78</sup> He moved southwards and defeated the rising power of Maratha armies near Panipat in 1761. He is considered as a scourge in the Indian history but is revered as a hero by the Pakhtuns.<sup>79</sup> His weak successors could not protect the dominions of the Durrani empire. While the settled areas of the North West Frontier

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<sup>74</sup> Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, 33

<sup>75</sup> Ibid;

<sup>76</sup> Ali Khan Mehsud, *La Pir Rokhana tar Bacha Khan Porey Da Pukhtano Milli Mobarizey tha Katana*, Pashto, (Peshawar: Danish Publishing Agency, nd), 64-84

<sup>77</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 11

<sup>78</sup> Griffiths, *Afghanistan*, 14

<sup>79</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement in India's North- West Frontier, 1901- 1947", 28



were ruled by individual local Khans and Sardars, the frontier tribes remained loyal to the Afghan rulers. In reality, they were as independent as they were in the past.

Taking advantage of the continued internal tribal differences among the Pakhutns, the Sikh ruler of Punjab Ranjit Singh succeeded in exploiting the situation and capturing the settled areas dominated by the Pakhtuns one by one. Dera Ismail Khan was overrun in 1818. Five years later the areas occupied by the Marwat tribes were captured. Peshawar was taken in 1834 after defeating the Pakhtun tribes near Nowshera. Despite the Sikh garrisons stationed in the settled districts, the Maharaja had to send troops every time for collecting taxes for the government. From 1818 to 1901, the settled districts remained part of the Punjab province.<sup>80</sup>

In fact, the Pakhtun tribes living in the tribal areas have never been practical part of any empire before the British occupation of their areas. However, they have been engaged with Kabul and Peshawar due to their shared geography, origin, language, culture and traditions. Moreover, the people of the settled districts and the tribes have acted upon their pre Islamic unwritten law called '*Pakhtunwali*' or code of conduct for regulating their lives whose major elements are *Melmastya* (hospitality to guests), *Badal* (revenge for insult or injury), *Nang* (protecting individual or collective honor) *Panah* (shelter to helpless and those who demands it), *Jirga* (conflict resolution mechanism), *Hujra* (a shared guest house), *Nanawatey* (forgiving those who seeks it after realizing an intentional or unintentional act of provocation against a person or a tribe), *Paighor* (taunt), Pakhtun customs, traditions and social values.<sup>81</sup> The tribesmen seem to have changed little despite experiencing many invasions in history of the region.<sup>82</sup> Many empires

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<sup>80</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 15

<sup>81</sup> Spain, *The Way of the Pathans*, 46- 54.

<sup>82</sup> Griffiths, *Afghanistan*, 13



have risen and fallen over the centuries but the frontier tribes maintained its political and geographical boundaries along with its social traditions.<sup>83</sup>

However, the outside influence and governance under different empires, socio- political activism, the adoption of modern education, political movements increased the gap between the Pakhtuns in the settled districts and those living in the mountainous tribal territory. While the tribes remained isolated for a long time from the Pakhtun mainland in Kabul and Peshawar maintaining its semi autonomous status, the people of the settled areas developed gradually under proper governance, socio- economic and political progress that changed the rigid form of tribalism with modernism according to needs of the time. Similarly, the Indian penal code and laws were applicable to the settled districts which were not the case with the tribal areas where every decision was taken in accordance with *Pakhtunwali* and local customs.

While the elements of *Pakhtunwali* have been revered by everyone including the aliens, it has also shortcomings that need to be changed in accordance with the needs of the time. For instance, the virtue of hospitality (*Melmastyā*) and shelter (*Panah*) were exploited by the *Al Qaeda* leader Osama Bin Ladin and his militant network in Afghanistan before 2001. After the tragic event of 9/11, he was indicted by the United States of masterminding the attacks in US. They demanded from the Taliban his ouster from Afghanistan which was refused on the plea of *Pakhtunwali* ie granting asylum to those who demand. The US attacked Afghanistan and ousted the Taliban from power. They suffered huge casualties but remained adamant till the end of not handing over Osama Bin Ladin to the invading forces. He was later killed by the United State's security forces in a night raid at his compound in Abbottabad in 2012. Hospitality and shelter compels a person to extend it even to an outlaw or a criminal provided he abides by the rules of the area. This was

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<sup>83</sup> Fazal Rahim, Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Afghanistan and the Frontier*, ed, Ahmad, "Pakhtun Tribes in the Great Game", (Peshawar: Emjay Books International, 1993),194



also one of the reasons of clashes between the British and the local tribes since they would not hand over a person demanded by the government.

The main focus of the British policy in the North West Frontier and the tribes was aimed at keeping the region as a buffer zone for the defense of India. While the tribal areas were kept as semi interdependent, the settled districts were also treated differently from the rest of the Indian people which will be discussed in this chapter. However, the socio- political struggle started by the Pakhtun intelligentsia headed by Abdul Ghaffar Khan tried to socially and educationally reform the Pakhtun society on the one hand and to rescue the people from slavery of the British through waging a constitutional struggle by making himself an example to be followed. His was the first movement in the Pakhtun history which changed the course of history and unified hundreds of thousands of people for a common political objective against the British.

#### **1.4 Arrival of the British in the North West Frontier and Making of the Province**

With the occupation of Punjab from the Sikhs, the British also inherited the five settled areas of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and D.I. Khan of the North West Frontier in 1849.<sup>84</sup> These areas were dominated by the Pakhtuns and were transferred to the regular British administration of Punjab.<sup>85</sup> However, the people of the Frontier were treated differently from all other areas of India. Throughout the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, various schemes for the formulation of a new administrative unit on the North Western border of India were mooted, submitted and debated by the British Indian government.<sup>86</sup> The strategic location of the region for the defense of India required a separate kind of administration. The Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) also

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<sup>84</sup> India Office Library Record, "Summary of Viceroy's Memorandum about General Policy on the North- West Frontier", 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, IOR/L/PS/12/3265

<sup>85</sup> Brandon Marsh, *Ramparts of Empire: British Imperialism and India's Afghan Frontier 1918- 1948*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 16

<sup>86</sup> Baha, *NWFP Administration Under British Rule*, 15



known as tranquility Act was enacted in 1872 that sanctioned punishments and mass arrests without trial or legal support and placed heavy restrictions on the political assembly of the people in the settled areas of the frontier. Moreover, this was far stricter in the frontier than the rest of India and directly limited all sorts of civil liberties.<sup>87</sup>

Political reforms were considered as dangerous for the settled area and linked to gun powder magazine.<sup>88</sup> If civilizing the people was a mission of the British authorities then ignoring the province and its people from all kinds of reforms on the pattern of other parts of India was indefensible.<sup>89</sup> The British ignored the idea of helping the Pakhtuns throughout their rule in India.<sup>90</sup> Instead of developing the settled areas of the frontier, the British were moving westwards and debating the occupation of the tribal areas and Afghanistan at large. Bringing peace and progress to the region was of little importance for the British. Security of India was the most important aspect of the British policy towards the region.<sup>91</sup>

Like all the conquerors and invaders who have always tried to strengthen their empires by making their borders as strategically safeguarded, the British also debated and developed different methods of protecting the British Indian Empire from the North West Frontier region of India. The first policy of the British towards the Indian North Western Frontier was of ‘Closed Border Policy’ and Indus river was considered as the border of India which aimed at leaving Afghanistan, the tribal areas and the settled districts as a buffer region for the enemy between British India and Tsarist Russia in their great game. However, this policy was never acted upon. Another model presented by British strategists was a ‘Scientific Frontier’ based on Kabul,

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<sup>87</sup> Sruti Bala, “Waging Nonviolence: Reflections on the History Writing on the Pashtun Nonviolent Movement Khudai Khidmatgar”, *Peace and Change: Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (April 2013), 135

<sup>88</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 26

<sup>89</sup> Christian Tripodi, “Negotiating with the Enemy: Politicals and Tribes 1901-47” *The journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, (London), Vol. 39, No. 4 (November 2011), 590

<sup>90</sup> Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, 19

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*; 34



Ghazni and Kandahar Line during the second Anglo- Afghan war (1878- 1880) and the objective was quickly occupying the important passes and routes in case of any Russian aggression. However, looking at the cost and benefits of the policy, the British opted for a change in policy regarding the Frontier.

The third most important Imperial policy towards the North West Frontier region was ‘Three-fold Frontier’ used by Lord Curzon since 1901. Before he became the Viceroy in January 1899, he had been interested in the Indian Affairs and extensively travelled to Central Asia. This policy was aimed at having three types of frontiers. The first was to leave a weak but independent Afghanistan as a buffer state properly tied up with British India through agreements and subsidies to the Afghan Amir. Secondly, the tribal areas would play as buffer zone under the political manipulations of the British in the form of semi-independent status and would be dealt with by the Governor General in Calcutta. These areas would be present in the map of the British India but no Indian law will be applicable there. The third frontier was the settled districts that were made integral part of India.

The “Three-fold Frontier” was the solution to the problem of defining the forms of power to be exercised by the Government of India in the subcontinent and its environs. The first frontier was the outer edge of “directly administered territory; the second was that of indirect administration; and the third, the outer edge of the area of influence. The first of these frontiers defined “British India” (settled districts) the territory administered in the normal pattern, where the Government of India exercised full authority, imposing its legal and political system. Beyond this was a zone (tribal areas) regarded as under the territorial control of the Indian Government, but where the law and administrative forms, especially the system of taxation, were not applied. This was the “Frontier of Separation.” Tribal chieftains continued customary forms of government, with general control exercised over them by the Government of India through subsidies and, ultimately, the army...beyond this delimited and demarcated



boundary was the third frontier region, the protectorate or buffer state (Afghanistan), independent but tied by treaties or other forms of obligations to the Government of India.”<sup>92</sup>

The demarcation of the Durand Line in 1893 between British India and Afghanistan, the separation of the settled districts from the Punjab and making of the North West Frontier Province (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) in 1901 by Viceroy Lord Curzon and keeping the tribal areas as a buffer zone were all effective steps for giving a practical shape to the ‘Three- fold Frontier’ policy of the British. Before the separation of the settled districts from the Punjab and creation of the NWFP, the British were aware of the importance of North West Frontier region. They might have studied the early history of the area and invaders coming from the North West along with the support of its people. Subsequently, the British waged three wars against Afghanistan for making the Indian Frontier acceptable to both the Indian government and the Afghan Amir. Long before the occupation of the Punjab, two opposing schools of thought regarding the Frontier policy were at work. One school was in favor of expansionism or the aggressive forward policy and the non-interventionist group supporting closed border policy or masterly inactivity towards the tribes.<sup>93</sup>

The separation of the settled districts from the Punjab was not meant to give proper attention to its progress but to control it better and safeguard the Imperial political and strategic interests. In other words, it was a mean to an end rather than end itself. The districts populated by the Pakhtuns were grouped into a separate province of the NWFP on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1901. The five districts were to be governed by a Chief Commissioner assisted by Deputy Commissioners of every district who were in turn assisted by Assistant Commissioners. The Chief Commissioner was also to act as an agent to the governor general of India for regulating the affairs of the tribal

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<sup>92</sup> Embree Ainslie T, *Pakistan's Western Borderlands: The Transformation of Political Order*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1979), 26-28

<sup>93</sup> Asmatullah, “Birth and Evolution of the Tribal Areas as Strategic Outpost”, Unpublished M. Phil Thesis submitted to the Department of History, (Islamabad: Quaid-i- Azam University, 2014), 13



areas. The rationale behind controlling the Frontier tribes from Calcutta was to quickly response to any Russian aggression.

In the inaugural ceremony of the province on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1902 at Shahi Bagh Peshawar, Lord Curzon while explaining the benefits of the new development also warned the people that “You are the keepers of your own houses. We are ready enough to leave you in possession. But if you dart out from behind the shelter of a door to harass, pillage and slay, then you must not be surprised if we return quickly and batter the door in”. In fact, the making of the province seems to be more a restructuring of the political system rather than a genuine plan for socio- political or educational reforms. They just wanted to control the frontier province without being considered as fit for any political and economic advancement. This is also evident from excluding the NWFP from the reforms which were introduced to the rest of India in 1909 because the settled districts of the province were made an integral part of India where all the laws were applicable and taxes were to be collected. However, political and economic reforms were not to be introduced in the province despite the fact that the people were lagging behind in all spheres of life than the rest of the Indian regions. The strategic importance of the area and the history of instability in the region were major factors for excluding the province from the constitutional reforms given in the Minto- Morley reforms of 1909.<sup>94</sup>

### **1.5 Occupation of the Frontier Tribes and Creation of the Tribal Agencies**

After administering the settle districts of the Frontier province for almost three decades, the British Indian government embarked upon the forward policy and turned towards occupying the adjacent frontier tribes or the tribal areas. The scheme of the Indian Frontier depended on the

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<sup>94</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1992), 8



administration of the trans- frontier tribes.<sup>95</sup> The Viceroy writes that in 1887, the government of India informed the Punjab government that it appeared to them that the time has arrived when it becomes of extreme importance that an effort be made to bring the great belt of Independent tribal territory under control for the purpose of any external aggression.<sup>96</sup> In fact, the frontier tribes have been more rebellious to foreign rule throughout its history and all of the religious leaders have used Islam as unifying force and *Jihad* (holy war) as a source of mobilization against the foreign occupiers. The sense of their independence and separateness from others has added to their resistance against the foreigners.<sup>97</sup> They have proved disruptive for all the invaders who have crossed their passes or tried to control them without being taking into account the communality of their faith with the invaders. Neither the Mughals and Sikhs were spared nor the British were welcomed who already had occupied the settled areas of the North West Frontier.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, the tribal areas of the Frontier were the last free place on the earth.<sup>99</sup> But still the rulers who ruled Delhi and Kabul have been engaged and influenced these tribes one way or the other. In reality, the tribal area was known as *Yaghistan*, no man's land or the land of rebellions. Some of the Frontier tribes living in the tribal territory have migrated from the nearby places of present day Afghanistan during the 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century and settled in their present areas.<sup>100</sup> In fact, all the Pakhtuns throughout the South Asian region have originated from the areas of present day Afghanistan and North-Western border region of India and migrated in waves to different areas starting from the Indian invasions of Mahmud Ghaznavi in 1001.

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<sup>95</sup> Baha, *NWFP Administration under British Rule*, 15

<sup>96</sup> India Office Library Record, "Memorandum of the Viceroy about the policy on the North- West Frontier", IOR/L/PS/12/3265, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939

<sup>97</sup> Baha, *NWFP Administration*, 4

<sup>98</sup> Rahim, Fazal and Shah, Sayed Wiqar Ali, *Afghanistan and the Frontier*, ed, Ahmad, "Pakhtun Tribes in the Great Game", 190

<sup>99</sup> Ibid; 186

<sup>100</sup> Hussain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes along the Pak-Afghan Border*, 8- 17



The Frontier tribes though living in an almost similar geography, common race and religion and socio- economic conditions have different temperaments with slight variations in their social habitat, customs and traditions. On a broader level, all of them have strictly followed *Pakhtunwali* which is considered as the unwritten constitution of the Pakhtuns for dealings and regulating their lives. According to the British record, there were three thousand distinct tribal units which have been further divided into sub tribes, clans and extended families in the tribal territory.<sup>101</sup> They have been living in an insular world where none of the conquerors passing through the passes have tried seriously to bring these tribes to the mainstream of the Indian sub continent except the desire of controlling the important passes in the region. Nor have the Afghan dynasties ever bothered to bring the area and its tribes under proper governance though all the Afghan rulers claimed to have the allegiance of the leading tribal leaders.

The British were the first who tried till their last to control the tribes and to have a permanent influence over them through the military might and political tactics. The initial British policy for a quarter of century towards the Frontier tribes was of Close Border Policy. The policy was based on non interference and non aggression towards the tribes. Individual friendly agreements were made with the tribes in return for allowances and subsidies. They were allowed entry into the British Indian territories or the settled districts freely but the British officials were directed not to cross into the tribal areas.<sup>102</sup> However, the Russian advance in Central Asia alarmed the British and they perceived the Russian threat as real to the British Indian Empire. The close border policy was replaced with an aggressive forward policy not only in the tribal areas but Afghanistan as well during the 1890s. Prior to the arrival of the British, these independent tribes between India and Afghanistan have been engaged both with Delhi and Kabul.

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<sup>101</sup> Christian Tripodi, "Negotiating with the Enemy: Politicals and Tribes 1901-47", 591

<sup>102</sup> Baha, *NWFP Administration Under British Rule*, 5



The mighty British Empire had already started controlling the tribes by formally undertaking agreements with individual tribes in each of the agencies along with military force. In 1891, the Tirah valley was occupied. In 1892, the Turi tribe in Kurram agency allowed their area to be controlled by the British through Kurram Militia. These forward steps made the Afghan Amir suspicious of the British intentions.<sup>103</sup> Two Anglo- Afghan wars in 1838 and 1878 had already weakened the position of the Afghan Amir. Finally, the Durand Line agreement was concluded between the British foreign secretary of state Sir Mortimer Durand and the Afghan Amir Abdur Rehman for the delimitation of the Indo- Afghan border.<sup>104</sup> In the process, the British government divided some of the major tribes such as the Wazirs, Shinwaris and Mohmands between British India and Afghanistan.<sup>105</sup> Interestingly, the tribes were neither left to Kabul nor integrated with British India.

The first two Anglo- Afghan wars, the Durand line agreement and having control over the foreign policy of Afghanistan in lieu of subsidies to the Afghan Amir left that country to act as a buffer state.<sup>106</sup> Additionally, the frontier tribes were also left as a buffer zone between Afghanistan and the frontier province by giving them a semi autonomous status. From the military point of view, it was important for the security of India to take a portion of the tribal independence and keep them under a loose form of control.<sup>107</sup> It was held that the tribal areas could be politically controlled from a center in the settled districts through subsidies, allowances, occasional interference in their tribal affairs and sometimes punitive military expeditions.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid; 6

<sup>104</sup> Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, 21

<sup>105</sup> Pyarelal, *A Pilgrimage for Peace*, 4

<sup>106</sup> Rahim and Shah, "Afghanistan and the Frontier", ed, Ahmad, *Pakhtun Tribes in the Great Game*, 200

<sup>107</sup> Andrew, *The Challenge of the North West Frontier*, 61

<sup>108</sup> Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, 116



The colonial authorities were masters of making incidents to show the world that they were the injured party and that aggression had taken place from the opposite side.<sup>109</sup> In order to rule and govern the tribes and to serve their political interests, the British occupied the tribes one by one. By annexing the tribal areas and encroachment in all the strategic positions, a natural resistance was provoked.<sup>110</sup> The British undertook more than forty expeditions against the tribes from 1858 to 1902.<sup>111</sup> The number of troops increased from 280 in 1878 to 40,000 in 1898 against the Afridi and Orakzai tribes.<sup>112</sup> They tightened their grip during all this time and divided the area into five different tribal agencies or administrative units as there existed no special agency before the British annexation. The division and creation of the agencies was an integral part of the British great game strategy. Giving semi-autonomous status to the area would mean that a tribal raid in Afghanistan could always be disowned by the British whereas the political agent would be directing or financing it.<sup>113</sup> In other words, the political agent would officially denounce any subversive activity by indirectly playing his own role in the great game.<sup>114</sup>

Apart from creating five political agencies that separated the tribes from the Afghan sphere of influence, the administrative border was drawn between the tribes and the settled districts of the frontier. The following are some of the major frontier tribes inhabiting the tribal areas that were divided into five political agencies namely Khyber agency, North and South Waziristan, Kurram agency and Malakand Agency. Furthermore, these agencies were separated from the five settled districts of Hazara, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and D.I. Khan through the six Frontier Regions (FRs) or administrative border adjoining the settled districts of the province.

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<sup>109</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 14

<sup>110</sup> Andrew, *The Challenge of the North West*, 61

<sup>111</sup> Spain, *The Way of the Pathans*, 33

<sup>112</sup> Ibid;

<sup>113</sup> Rahim and Shah, *Afghanistan and the Frontier*, ed, Ahmad, Pakhtun Tribes in the Great Game, 202

<sup>114</sup> Ibid;



## 1.6 Khyber Agency

The Khyber Agency was created in 1878 during the second Anglo Afghan War (1878-80) and is inhabited by the famous Afridis, Shinwaris and Mullagoris.<sup>115</sup> They had an estimated population of four lakhs before independence and a strong fighting force of seventy thousand.<sup>116</sup> The tribes occupy the world's famous passes the Khyber, Tirah and Kohat.<sup>117</sup> The Khyber Pass that connects Kabul and Peshawar is probably the most important of all the passes in the world and has remained as a gateway to India from Central Asia.<sup>118</sup> Alexander the great used the same route for crossing over to India in the spring of 327 BC.<sup>119</sup>

Some of these tribes during the early period of Islam were living between river Kabul and Kurrum and migrated to the hills of Tirah and their present areas in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>120</sup> Each of them is divided into various clans or *Khels*. For instance, the Afridi tribe is composed of eight larger clans namely, Akakhel, Zakakhel, Kukikhel, Qambarkhel, Malik Din Khel, Sipy, Qamar Khel and Adam Khel.<sup>121</sup> Similarly, the other two tribes are also divided into various clans and extended families and majority of the Shinwari tribe is living in Ningrahar province of Afghanistan. Apart from those living in Afghanistan, a large number of them reside in northern hills of the Khyber and some are living in Kohat. Babur in the *Babur Nama* tells about the erection of pillars of human heads in Khyber, Kohat and Bannu while crossing the area and described the people as death devoted.<sup>122</sup> The founder of Afghanistan, Ahmad Shah Abdali had employed 19000 Afridi fighting men in his army and his successors continued the payment of

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<sup>115</sup> Baha, *NWFP Administration*, 6

<sup>116</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 62

<sup>117</sup> Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes*, 8

<sup>118</sup> Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, 25

<sup>119</sup> Ibid; 27

<sup>120</sup> Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes*, 8

<sup>121</sup> Ibid;

<sup>122</sup> Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, 30



toll tax to the tribes living in the Khyber.<sup>123</sup> They have always been trouble makers for all the invaders who passed through the Khyber Pass.

### **1.7 North and South Waziristan**

The North and South Waziristan agencies were created in 1895 and 1896 respectively.<sup>124</sup> The total area of North and South Waziristan is 5000 square miles.<sup>125</sup> The Wazir, Mehsud and Dawar tribes are major tribes residing in both North and South Waziristan. The Wazir tribe before independence was estimated to be 5 lakh and about one lakh fighters, though, they have hardly fought against a common enemy unitedly. They had greatly assisting the Afghan King Nadir Shah in defeating his opponent Bacha Saqao in 1929 and after sitting him on the throne inflicted losses on the British in retaliation against brutalities on Khudai Khidmatgars in the 1930s.<sup>126</sup> There are two main branches of Wazirs. The Utmanzai Wazir tribe has been living in North Waziristan while the Ahmadzai Wazirs are based in South Waziristan. The famous areas occupied by them are Shawal, Birmal, Shakai, Razmak, Khaisor valley, Shaktu, Wana, and Badar etc. Apart from this, the Waziri tribe is also residing in the Frontier Region (FR) of Bannu in Domail and the nearby areas on the district border between the Bannuchi and Khattak tribes in district Bannu and Karak where thousands of Khudai Khidmatgars waged a peaceful struggle against the British. It should be noted that the same Wazir tribe has been bisected by the Durand Line near Birmal, the mountainous border region in North Waziristan.<sup>127</sup>

Another important tribe based in North Waziristan is Dawar. They have been driven out from Shawal border region of Waziristan by the Wazirs during the 14<sup>th</sup> century and occupied the main

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<sup>123</sup> Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes*, 33

<sup>124</sup> Baha, *NWFP Administration*, 7

<sup>125</sup> Rahim and Shah, *Afghanistan and the Frontier*, ed, Ahmad, *Pakhtun Tribes in the Great Game*, 188

<sup>126</sup> Yunus, *Frontier*, 65

<sup>127</sup> The author personally belongs to North Waziristan and knows about the people and geography of the area. The people on both sides of the Durand Line have common lands, relatives; having businesses, live with each other without caring much about the Line between the two countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan.



valley. The upper Dawars are settled along the river Tochi in Datta Khel and Miranshah tehsil which has been the headquarters of North Waziristan whereas the lower Dawars are residing in Mir Ali sub division where they had provided permanent abode to Haji Mirzali Khan popularly known as the Faqir of Ipi who proved himself as the most dangerous enemy of the British Empire in India and fought them from 1936 till their departure in 1947.<sup>128</sup> Many of his generals fighting the British belonged to Dawar tribe.<sup>129</sup> Bayazid or Pir Roshan in the sixteenth century initially was supported against the Mughal emperor Akbar by the Dawar tribe in North Waziristan and were actively involved in his struggle against the Mughals.

The Mehsud tribe is living in Kanniguram and Makin areas of South Waziristan. They are divided into three main branches namely the Alizai, Bahlolzai and Shaman Khel. They are further divided into Shabi Khel, Manzai Khel, Nanakhel and Aimal Khel. Some of the Mehsud tribe lives in District Tank and D. I. Khan. After the creation of Afghanistan in 1747, Ahmad

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<sup>128</sup> For details of the Faqir's struggle and the British policy for pacifying, bribing or killing him, see India Office Library Record, London, file no. IOR/R/12/71- 85 and 119 respectively. The files contain the official record, correspondence between the Indian Foreign Office Department, the Governor of the then NWFP (George Cunningham, Olaf Caroe), the British Legation at Kabul (Afghanistan) and the local civil and military authorities in Waziristan. The British rulers initially tried to pacify and convince the Faqir that they had no intension of interfering in religious and internal tribal affairs of the tribes but failed to convince him. Then they thought of bribing him through pro British religious clerics but could not succeed. After continuous attacks on British convoys while constructing roads for better communication and mobilization of the British forces as per the British official record shows, the British authorities used aeroplanes for bombing villages including women and children for giving shelter to the Faqir and his followers. After dropping hundreds of short notices from aeroplanes written in Urdu and Pashto for vacating the houses (copies of which are available with the author), whole villages were destroyed in areal bombardment. Moreover, the Afghan King and Prime Minister of the time were requested by the British minister at Kabul to either pacify or kill the Faqir. They tried unsuccessfully to convince the Faqir by sending him letters to come to an agreement with the British authorities. However, they showed their inability to kill him due to his popularity among the Pakhtun tribes on both sides of the Durand Line. However, the Afghan rulers pressurized their own Afghan tribesmen from crossing over the Durand Line and joining the Faqir's *Lashkar* since hundreds of Zadran, Tanis, Ghalji Afghan tribesmen used to cross the border on daily basis for fighting against the British. The Faqir proved as a thorn in the eyes of the British till their departure from India in August 1947.

<sup>129</sup> The author personally belong to Dawar Tribe of North Waziristan and have family relations with grandsons of Shobi Khel who had also helped the Afghan King, Nadir Khan in 1929 in recapturing the Afghan throne at Kabul from Habibullah betterly known as Bacha Saqao. The same general later joined the Faqir's *Lashkar* against the British in the 1930s. Moreover, the author has personally seen three names of his own villagers (one of whom has also taught the author Islamic education for few days in 1988) in the the British official CID record at British Library in London who were working for the Faqir against the British in 1937. Copy of the file is available with the author.



Shah Abdali managed a census of the fighting men of the tribes in Waziristan.<sup>130</sup> According to that census, Wazirs in north and south Waziristan as well as those who have migrated and settled in FR Baanu were counted as 60,000, the Mehsuds in South Waziristan and FR Tank as 18000 and Dawars in North Waziristan as 12000 males.<sup>131</sup> Women and children were not included in the census. The British had also adopted it for dealings and giving subsidies to the tribes. For instance, the British in an agreement with the Mehsud tribe gave 54,000 rupees for not attacking the government installations which were divided according to *Nikaat* (hereditary distribution) among the tribes.<sup>132</sup> Even today, when the population of North and South Waziristan exceeds two million people, the tribes decide their internal affairs and divide everything they get from the government according to the census undertaken by Ahmad Shah Abdali during the eighteenth century.

### **1.8 Kurram Agency**

Kurram Agency was created in 1892.<sup>133</sup> The occupation of Kurram valley gave the British command of routes leading to Ghazni and Kabul.<sup>134</sup> The Turis and Bangash tribes are two major tribes inhabiting the area and have been living in upper and lower Kurram respectively. Most of the Turi Tribe reside in upper Kurram with Parachinar as its headquarters are Shia Muslim and termed by some genealogists of a Mughal origin.<sup>135</sup> The Turis are divided into five main tribes and sub tribes.

The Bangash tribe is living in lower Kurram with Sadda as its headquarters. They were driven out of their first home Gardez in Afghanistan by Ghalji or Khilji tribe in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and

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<sup>130</sup> Gul Ayub Khan, *Tarikh-i- Bannu Wazirisristan*, Urdu, (Peshawar: Azeem Publishing Agency, nd), 32

<sup>131</sup> Ibid;

<sup>132</sup> Rahim and Shah, *Afghanistan and the Frontier*, ed, Ahmad, Pakhtun Tribes, 197

<sup>133</sup> Baha, *NWFP Administration Under British Rule*, 6

<sup>134</sup> Ibid; 4

<sup>135</sup> Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes*, 15



settled in Kurram region and is divided in many sub tribes. The Bangash are believed to be originally from Quresh of Arab descent and have merged with the Ghurghust Pakhtuns.<sup>136</sup> They are also known as Khalidi Afghans and were the followers of Bayazid, the founder of Roshanya Movement against the Mughals. The Mughal emperor Babur mentions them in his memoirs and were regularly attacked and massacred by the Mughals. Their present abode is Kurram agency. Some of them lived in the Iranian province of Mazandran and others settled in Farukhabad in India.<sup>137</sup>

### **1.9 Malakand Agency**

The Malakand Agency was created in 1895 that included the princely states of Dir, Swat and Chitral. These areas are overwhelmingly populated by the Pakhtun tribe of Yousafzai who also have settled in District Mardan and the surrounding areas. However, the state of Chitral has non Pakhtun tribes with their own languages, customs and traditions. For instance, the Kohistanis are of Mongol origin and have been pushed by the Yousafzai during the seventeenth century. Similarly, Kafirsistan in upper Chitral have people who worship nature and are considered to be the original inhabitants of the area. The Khan of Dir and the tribes received allowances in return for protecting the communication in their respective areas.<sup>138</sup> The state of Swat, Dir and Chitral were considered as the most peaceful and loyal to their rule by the British. After the creation of Pakistan, these states were merged and made separate districts of the NWFP under the provincial government.

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid;

<sup>137</sup> Ibid;

<sup>138</sup> Ibid; 7



### 1.10 Mohmand Agency

The Mohmand agency was created by the Pakistani government in 1951. The Mohmand area is about 1200 miles and an estimated population before 1947 was about four lakh.<sup>139</sup> However, the Mohmand area during the British rule was divided between Afghanistan and British sphere of influence. The Afghan Amir could not agree to the demarcation of the Mohmand area which was only decided in the agreement during the third Anglo Afghan war in 1919.<sup>140</sup> The person in their encounters with the British sustained heavy losses. They could collect a force of 35000 males within hours.<sup>141</sup> The tribe came under the influence of Haji of Turangzai in 1914 and was used by *mujahidin* against the British rule. The area is divided into upper (Bar) and lower (Koz) Mohmand. While some have settled in the south- west of Peshawar, others have captured the area between the western hills of the Afridis to the north of Khyber Pass.<sup>142</sup> Their epical ancestor named as Mohmand Baba is buried in Ekka Ghund in Mohmand agency on the Pakistani side. According to Ahmad, this tribe settled in Peshawar valley after the Yousafzais who arrived to their present areas between 1485- 1500 AD. Today, the Mohmand tribe is scattered across the Durand Line, Peshawar, Mardan and Mohmand agency.

### 1.11 Orakzai Agency

Orakzai agency was also created in 1973 by the Pakistani Government.<sup>143</sup> The Orakzai tribe of present day Orakzai agency is divided into seven major sub tribes, clans and extended families. The literal meaning of Orak (lost) Zoi (son) or lost son. According to a tradition, some thousand years ago, a Persian prince Sikar Shah was lost or exiled and he spent days around Kohat,

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<sup>139</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 63

<sup>140</sup> Baha, *NWFP Administration*, 7

<sup>141</sup> Yunus, 63

<sup>142</sup> Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes*, 10

<sup>143</sup> Akber S Ahmed, *Social and Economic Change in the Tribal Areas, 1972-1976*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1977), 23



married here and ruled Tirah Valley.<sup>144</sup> Their proper country is known as Orakzai Tirah and has four main valleys namely, Khanki, Khurmana, Mastura and Bara. Olaf Caroe tells about their colonies in India.<sup>145</sup> The Mughal emperor also mentions them and have had helped Bayazid Ansari and his Roshaniya Movement against the Mughals in the early sixteenth century. The tribe have also fought the British along side other tribesmen. They have also permanent settlements in Peshawar and Kohat cities.<sup>146</sup>

### **1.12 Bajaur Agency**

In Bajaur, the Yousafzai tribe is divided in different sub tribes and overran Bajaur during the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>147</sup> They have enjoyed privileged positions during the Delhi Sultanate and have served the Delhi Sultans in their campaigns.<sup>148</sup> Prior to its creation by Pakistan in 1973, the area was a sub division of Malakand agency under the British and considered as entirely inaccessible. However, the area and its tribes were under the British sphere of influence.

### **1.13 Frontier regions (FR) or the Administrative Border**

Apart from separating the five semi-independent tribal agencies from the influence of the Afghan Amir, the tribes were also separated from the settled districts of NWFP through the so called administrative border or the Frontier Regions (FRs) which was to be administered by the provincial government in collaboration with the Chief Commissioner of the province as an agent to the government of India. The Indian penal code and laws did not extend beyond this irregular administrative line and is inhabited by the same tribes living in the tribal agencies. This border divides the Pakhtuns living in the settled districts and the tribal agencies. The tribes of the

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<sup>144</sup> Hussain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes*, 14

<sup>145</sup> Ibid;

<sup>146</sup> Hussain, 14

<sup>147</sup> Ibid; 16

<sup>148</sup> Ibid; 17



frontier regions were administered by the deputy commissioners of the respective districts and provincial laws were applicable to them.<sup>149</sup> While the major portions of the independent tribes were living in the mountainous areas or semi autonomous tribal agencies, some sections of the same tribes had migrated to the Frontier Regions adjacent to the settled districts.

Apart from living in Afghanistan, the Wazir tribe of North and South Waziristan has also been settled in FR Bannu along side the Bannuchi, Khattak and Marwat tribes in the settled districts. Total area of FR Bannu is 877 square Kilo meter. The Bhattani and Shirani tribes have settled in F.R. Dera Ismail Khan on the border of district D.I. Khan and Tank. Its total area is 3329 square kilo meter. Some of the Afridis, Bangash and Orakzai tribes had migrated to FR Kohat and FR Peshawar which cover an area of 446 and 261 square kilo meters respectively. Presently, these Frontier regions are administered by the provincial government of NWFP. All the tribes residing in these tribal pockets or administered areas greatly contributed greatly to the non-violent freedom movement as they could legally visit this area. Moreover, the tribes of these areas would visit their brothers in the tribal agencies and informed them of the happenings in the settled areas and the Indian sub-continent. They would visit and help the *mujahidin* who were waging a holy war against the British. However, the tribes who were living in the tribal agencies where the Khudai Khidmatgars were barred from entering the area continued their tribal feuds as well as the armed resistance against the British. It should be noted that the tribes in the independent tribal agencies have often fought each other over the meagre economic resources, tribal jealousies and remained at logger heads with each other. The superiority of one tribe was considered as a weakness for the other. Balance of power was maintained through their internal conflict resolution mechanisms or *Jirgas*.

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<sup>149</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 58



### 1.14 British administration and Armed Resistance by the Frontier Tribes

On becoming the Viceroy in January, 1899, Lord Curzon had to deal with the Frontier tribes in a befitted manner after experiencing the great revolt of 1897 when the British forces were directly fighting the tribes for its occupation.<sup>150</sup> Afterwards, the British changed the policy by gradual occupation. In 1907, the Viceroy Lord Minto accepted a review of policy put forward by the Commander-in- Chief in India, Lord Kitchener where he writes that we should carry a policy of occupation up to Durand Line without showing a shadow of aggression in our actions and be prepared to justify every move forward.<sup>151</sup> The Frontier Crimes Regulation of 1872 which was revised and amended several times was also implemented in the tribal area in 1901 that remained a ‘corner’ stone of the British rule in India for the administration of the frontier region till 1947. In fact, the frontier tribes are being ruled through FCR to the present day. A British political agent was the uncrowned king of the agency who was supported by his assistants. They created the unpopular *maliks* or leaders as the representatives of the tribes who were regular beneficiaries of the British allowances and economic gains rather than the true socio- economic guardians of the people. At times, the same British made *maliks* would confect violence in order to be seen to address it, thus trying to reinforce their authority in the eyes of the British officials.<sup>152</sup> The *maliks* played the role of intermediaries between the tribes and the British political agent. Annual allowances and subsidies were given to them for good conduct and cooperation with the British. The British had spent fifty eight million rupees during the expeditions in the tribal areas from 1849 to 1878.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Baha, *NWFP Administration*, 12

<sup>151</sup> India Office Record Library, “Memorandum of the Viceroy about general policy on the North- West Frontier”, IOR/L/PS/12/3265, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939

<sup>152</sup> Tripodi, “Negotiating with the Enemy”, 595

<sup>153</sup> Juma Khan Sufi, “Reflections: The Challenge of FATA and Security of Pakistan”, *Institute of Strategic Studies*, (Islamabad), No. 1, (2015), 3. See also, Baha, *NWFP Administration*, 5



First skirmishes of the tribes had started with the British during the first Anglo Afghan War (1839-1842).<sup>154</sup> From the annexation of the Punjab in 1849 to the formation of the NWFP and the Tribal Area in 1901, the British had to undertake eight expeditions against the tribes living in the Khyber. The first one was undertaken in 1850 against the Afridi tribe of Kohat.<sup>155</sup> Within a month after the annexation of the Kohat Pass, the Afridis were given 5, 700 rupees annually for safeguarding the pass.<sup>156</sup> Before the end of the year, the Afridis rose in revolt. More than 3, 200 soldiers opened the pass temporarily and after their withdrawal, the Afridis fell upon the Caravans again.<sup>157</sup> This time 8, 000 rupees were given to the nearby Orakzai tribe for protecting the pass and led to the inter-tribal feud among themselves. The third subsidy was given to the Bangash tribe and finally, tribal feud drew the people away from the pass itself.<sup>158</sup> It clearly shows the weak financial position and meager economic resources of the tribes and the highhandedness and manipulation of the British. A careful study of the British policy and the only consideration against a possible Russian threat reveals that the British Indian officers were least bothered about the economic empowerment of the people.<sup>159</sup>

Efforts to get independence from the British rule by the indigenous people were part of a tradition of struggle against various conquerors over the centuries which according to Jawaharlal Nehru were a meeting place of Greek, Indian, Chinese and Iranian cultures.<sup>160</sup> After looking at the British penetration into the area, constructing forts and frequent movement of the troops in the area, the entire tribal belt rose in open revolt in 1897. The tribes feared that the British were

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<sup>154</sup> Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes*, 34

<sup>155</sup> Ibid;

<sup>156</sup> Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, 107

<sup>157</sup> Ibid;

<sup>158</sup> Ibid; See also Spain, *The way of the Pathans*, 56

<sup>159</sup> Andrew, *The Challenge of the North West Frontier*, 65

<sup>160</sup> R.. Kurtz Lester, "Peace Profile: Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Non- violent Jihad", *Peace Review*, George Mason University, (Jun 2011), 246 Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2011.571622>



destroying their long lasting independence.<sup>161</sup> Despite, their internal tribal feuds and disunity, the British installations were attacked throughout the tribal areas. Hundreds of British Indian soldiers were killed. The revolt erupted in June 1897, when a tribal *Lashkar* of over 1000 men attacked the British forces who under the commandership of Captain Gee at Maizar Madda Khel village in North Waziristan were going to collect a fine from the tribe for killing a government employee i.e a clerk. The fight continued for several hours. More than hundred of the tribesmen were killed and their village was set on fire at the cost of three British officers and dozens of British Indian soldiers.<sup>162</sup> With the spread of the news, the entire frontier region from Chitral to South Waziristan was in rebellion attacking British installations iIn their respective areas killing hundreds of British soldiers.<sup>163</sup> In Malakand, *Mullah* Saadullah (Mastana *Mullah*) gathered a *Lashkar* of 12000 persons and attacked the British from two sides. In August, Hadda *Mullah* organized a tribal *Lashkar* of 5000 in Mohmand area and attacked the British at Shabqadar.<sup>164</sup> In early September, an Afridi and Orakzai *Lashkar* of 15000 men under the leadership of *Mullah* Syed Akbar Khan Kaka Khel threatened the British, taken the Khyber Pass and retired to Tirah after additional British columns were called from Peshawar and Kohat.<sup>165</sup> The total pacification and punishment of all the tribes employed 75,000 troops.<sup>166</sup> Various expeditions were undertaken against the Afridis, Wazirs, Orakzais, Mohmands and into Swat. Only the invasion of Tirah employed 40, 000 troops in 1898.<sup>167</sup> The Afridis formed their own government in Tirah.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Baha, *NWFP Administration*, 8

<sup>162</sup> Mills, H. Woosnam, *The Pathan Revolt in North- West India*. Lahore: The Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1897, pp. 14-15.

<sup>163</sup> Mills, H. Woosnam, *The Pathan Revolt in North- West India*. Lahore, The Civil and Military Gazette Press, (1897), 1-30

<sup>164</sup> Collin C Davies, *The Problem of the North West Frontier 1890- 1908: With a Survey of Policy Since 1849*, (London: Curzon press, 1975), 96- 98. See also Spain, *The Pathan borderland*, 178

<sup>165</sup> Spain, 178

<sup>166</sup> Ibid;

<sup>167</sup> Ibid;

<sup>168</sup> Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes*, 35



Whole villages were razed to the ground; crops destroyed and the forces committed every atrocity for subduing the tribes and bringing peace.

Additionally, huge fines were levied on the tribes and large quantities of rifles were confiscated. Agreements with the tribes were contracted through *jirgas* for maintaining peace. Though peaceful in 1897, the Mehsud tribe in South Waziristan had already attacked and burned down the British Boundary Commission camp at Wana after which a large British garrison was positioned there.<sup>169</sup> Later on, the Mehsuds under the leadership of *Mullah* Pawindah remained aggressive against the British and imposing a fine of 100, 000 in December 1900, was rejected and retaliated with more attacks. The British had to march a force of 12,000 soldiers but could not subdue the tribe. Religious mobilization by the religious leaders like Mastana *Mullah* in Swat, Pawinda *Mullah* in South Waziristan played important role and encouraged movements against the British in the region.<sup>170</sup>

According to the civil and military gazette of 1897, the British considered the Afghan Amir, Abdur Rehman in the background of the tribal general revolt. However, he denied any responsibility about his role and as symbol of good will to the British renounced the appeal of the Afridis to be their religious leader and closed his territory for the fugitives who wanted to escape the wrath of the British *Sarkar*.<sup>171</sup> The British estimate of total fighting men in the tribal territory at the time was about 200,000 in the tribal territory.<sup>172</sup> Only, the Afridi tribe had a tribal *Lashkar* of about 28000 persons for fighting the British.<sup>173</sup> In the words of Major Roose- Keppel, “Every tribesman including woman and children looked upon those who attacked the British

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<sup>169</sup> Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, 118

<sup>170</sup> Shah, *North-West Frontier*, xv

<sup>171</sup> Mills, *The Pathan Revolt in North- West India*, 3

<sup>172</sup> Ibid; 7

<sup>173</sup> Ibid;



forces and installations as champions. They were considered as the crusaders of the Pakhtuns and received like heroes on successful attacks”.<sup>174</sup>

The tribal uprisings were controlled through military force together with Malakand Field Force, Khyber Rifles, local *Khasadar* and *militia* force. Gradually, the intensity of the tribal attacks on the British installations was curtailed and the act of giving collective punishments to whole tribes, including women and children, blockading, destroying properties and bulldozing villages in response to any attack minimized the tribal resentment for the time. Moreover, Lord Curzon’s withdrawal of troops behind the so called administrative border or Frontier region along the districts which was completed in 1902 reduced the tribal uprisings considerably for a long period.<sup>175</sup> After creating the new province in November 1901, the tribal agencies were also created and the FCR of 1872 was formally imposed in each of the agency. The responsibility of security was given to the newly created militia and levies forces consisting of the local tribes instead of the British soldiers. The *Maliki* system was further enhanced for controlling the tribes through their own men instead of the British themselves. The political agent was made the Viceroy of the tribal agency.

Moreover, the British political officers throughout the frontier region failed to understand the Pakhtun society, culture values and behavior. While the British considered themselves as more civilized by looking through their own Western orientations, the Pakhtuns considered them as foreigners, occupiers and oppressors.<sup>176</sup> Even today, the word “political” in the Pakhtun tribal mind is the name of falsehood and deceit. While some of the British officials were romantically attached with the Frontier and its people, others were antagonists and displayed antipathy

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<sup>174</sup> Andrew, “*The Challenge of the North West Frontier*”, 63

<sup>175</sup> Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, 179

<sup>176</sup> Tripodi, “Negotiating with the Enemy”, 593



towards the Pakhtuns.<sup>177</sup> Indeed one may find many examples of such ethnocentrism in the British official files and memoirs that make references describing the Pakhtuns particularly those of the tribal area as “uncivilized savages”, “fundamentally untrustworthy”, “fanatics”, “barbarians” and “priest ridden Muhammdans”.<sup>178</sup> The British did not understand the Pakhtun psyche and egalitarian society. According to Abdul Ghani Khan, the Pakhtun poet and politician, every Pakhtun thinks of himself as Alexander the great and wants the world to admit it.<sup>179</sup> The British could have easily controlled the Pakhtuns by understanding their nature, socio- political and economic conditions. The British never tried seriously to think about the well being of the people. They were just manipulating the people for their own political and strategic interests. The resistance was not only motivated by their culture rather social, political and economic factors were also involved in their struggle.<sup>180</sup>

It was only in the 1910s and 1920s that the religious cum nationalist leaders like Fazl-i- Wahid known in history as Haji Sahib of Turangzai together with other prominent Pakhtuns started a two- fold process. On the one hand, they started establishing Azad *madrassas* (seminaries) and trying to fight the British militarily on the other. In the settled areas, large scale general political opposition to the British throughout India was started during the same period. The Khilafat and the Hijrat Movement though a failed attempt played a role in organizing anti British forces in the region. The settled areas of the NWFP also succeeded in starting the first ever non-violent constitutional struggle against the British rule on the Pakhtun land under the leadership of Abdul Ghaffar Khan in 1929 which will be elaborated in the next chapter.

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid;

<sup>178</sup> Ibid;

<sup>179</sup> Ghani. *The Pathans*, 9

<sup>180</sup> Tripodi, “Negotiating with the Enemy”, 589



## Chapter Two

### **Political Conditions in the NWFP and Emergence of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement (1901- 1929)**

“I wish to unite the Pakhtuns, give them pen and take away gun, educate and discipline them and then ask the whole world to come and see my nation how peaceful, non-violent, civilized and polite they are (Abdul Ghaffar Khan)”.<sup>1</sup>

The political situation in the tribal areas and the settled districts from 1901 to the start of the First World War in 1914 remained peaceful in comparison to the revolts of 1890s as a result of the British new political and administrative arrangements. The encounters between the tribes and the British were limited in magnitude and scale.<sup>2</sup> The steps taken by the British authorities for pacifying the tribes had brought the situation to normal. Replacing the British soldiers with local militia and Khasadar force and contracting new agreements with the tribes were major steps taken by the Curzon administration. Though, the British authorities continued to deem the whole frontier as a great peril.<sup>3</sup> However, the tribes did not fail to understand the preoccupation of the British during the Great War which was quickly followed by the Third Anglo-Afghan War in 1919 under Amir Amanullah Khan leading to the break down of militia system and unsatisfactory terms from the British point of view.<sup>4</sup>

The political condition in the settled districts was comparatively peaceful during the same period as compared to the tribal areas of the Frontier. The British increased their hold in the province by

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<sup>1</sup> Khurshid Alam. *Few Words Before the End*, Lahore: np, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Christian Tripodi, *Edge of Empire: The British Political Officer and the Tribal Administration on the North- West Frontier: 1877-1947*, (London: Ash gate Publishing Company, 2011), 109

<sup>3</sup> Brandon Marsh, *Ramparts of Empire: British Imperialism and India's Afghan Frontier 1918- 1948*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 30

<sup>4</sup> India Office Record Library, “Memorandum of the Viceroy about the general policy on the North- West Frontier”, IOR/L/PS/12/3265, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939



enhancing the status of *Khans* and *Nawabs* in the settled districts and *maliks* in the tribal areas by giving them large tract of lands and subsidies respectively due to their service for the British *Raj*. A *malik* in the tribal area was of a lesser political status and influence as compared to the powerful land owning *Khan* in the province.<sup>5</sup> The influence of the tribal *maliks* was confined to their respective tribes and every tribe had its own *malik* and was not entitled to have large tracts of land as was the *Khan* and *Nawab* in the settled areas. These people were patronized and used by the British for controlling and subjugating the common people easily. The British also tried to create big *Khans* and *Nawabs* in the tribal area on the pattern of the settled districts, but the conservative tribal social structure had no place for accommodating a land owning class. The frontier tribes could neither accept nor obey a big *Khan* other than their own tribal chiefs whose influence was limited to his own tribe.<sup>6</sup> The British had to subdue the frontier region who possessed extreme form of democracy.<sup>7</sup> This was also one of the reasons the British could not subdue all the tribes at the same time. The Pakhtun society in general was unhappy with the British and in search of creating troubles as they were seen as occupiers of their land and freedom.

The events in the preceding years of the First World War kept the NWFP in a war like situation. The British had to control a region that was extremely volatile and prone to sedition and political disturbances keeping in view the international factors involved in the war.<sup>8</sup> Over half of the Indian army was kept in the Frontier province throughout the war years.<sup>9</sup> The law and order situation during the war was kept considerably under control. However, the political conditions in India, the Anglo- Afghan war (1919) and the emergence of independent Afghanistan were

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<sup>5</sup> Stephen Alan Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement in India's North- West Frontier, 1901- 1947", Unpublished PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Political Science, (University of Columbia, 1977), 39

<sup>6</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan, *Zama Zhwand au Jaddo Jehad*, Pashto, (Peshawar, 1985), 108

<sup>7</sup> Tripodi, *Edge of Empire*, 12

<sup>8</sup> Ibid; 109

<sup>9</sup> Brandon, "Ramparts of Empire, 30



more alarming for the British in consolidating their rule in the region. The Pakhtun collective politico- religious consciousness of the past and the changing political situation in India was gradually giving way to constitutional politics in the settled areas in response to the British military control and non participation of the indigenous people in the decision making process. The tribal areas were already kept as semi independent due to their constant resistance to the British rule in the region.

The Pakhtuns of the settled districts where the population was heterogeneous spearheaded the political struggle in the province instead of the armed resistance in the tribal areas where the entire population was Pakhtun. Out of the five settled districts in the province, the district of Hazara and D.I. Khan contained major portions of Indian Muslims such as Awans, Tanaolis, Gujjars and Kashmiris in the former and Baloch and Jats in the later.<sup>10</sup> However, the Peshawar valley, Kohat, Bannu and the surrounding rural areas were overwhelmingly Pakhtuns. According to the 1921 census report, the total population of the province was 5.8 million people and ninety three per cent of these were Muslims.<sup>11</sup> Pashto was spoken by fifty six percent of the people.<sup>12</sup> However, the non Pakhtun people in the province were also integrated into the Pakhtun society by adopting their social values, customs and traditions as a result of their close interaction for centuries. Due to the numerical and cultural dominance of the Pakhtuns in the region, they were the direct target and sufferers of the British rule. The resistance by the people whether violent or non-violent was anything but natural and the continuation of their traditional struggle against foreigners. The political developments in India and Afghanistan were influencing the North West Frontier Province despite the fact that the British policy makers tried their best to keep the

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<sup>10</sup> Lal Baha, *NWFP Administration Under British Rule: 1901-1919*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research), 1978, 4

<sup>11</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, 5

<sup>12</sup> Ibid; 6



frontier away from the mainstream Indian politics. After the creation of the province in 1901, the British had established the most rigid military regime in the settled areas of the province.<sup>13</sup>

The British were good strategists and studied well the history of the region and its people. The tribal revolts had recently added to their experience of controlling the people. Looking at the nature of the Pakhtuns and strategic location of the province, the British policy makers had already divided the region in different administrative units and the socio- political reforms were not only applicable to the semi-autonomous tribal areas rather the settled districts were also debarred from the reforms. In British view, the Pakhtuns required special treatment and that the love of freedom should be knocked out of them.<sup>14</sup> The reforms of 1909 and 1919 which were extended to the rest of Indian provinces were denied to the NWFP. Looking to the divisions among the people, deplorable socio- political conditions and educational backwardness within the province, some of the Pakhtun traditional rural elite together with religious leaders in the districts seriously started thinking of ways which could bring them out of the socio- political stagnation and the British slavery.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan popularly known as Bacha Khan of Charsadda was in contact with the *Ulema* of Deoband as well the local prominent Pakhtun religious personalities since 1910 that were in search of a suitable place in the semi independent tribal areas for waging a holy war against the British rule. Ghaffar Khan's visits to the tribal areas during the war and assisting the *mujahidin* are clear example of his favoring and supporting armed resistance against the colonialists.<sup>15</sup> This was the time when the Afghan Amir Amanullah Khan mobilized the Pakhtun

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<sup>13</sup> Abdul Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns on the Pathan Frontier*, (Bombay: Hind Kitabs Publishers, 1945), 26

<sup>14</sup> Ibid;

<sup>15</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan after consulting Shaikh-ul- Hind Mahmud-ul- Hassan of Deoband and Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi visited the tribal territory in January 1914 for searching a suitable place and raising a tribal rebellion against the British. However, after closely observing the situation, poverty and disunity among the tribes and pathetic condition of the allowance holder tribal *maliks* decided to opt for alternative way rather than an armed struggle that



tribes on both sides of the Durand Line to raise in rebellion against the British. However, Abdul Ghaffar Khan after observing the disorganized tribes, deplorable socio- political situation in the province, social evils and educational backwardness, reached the conclusion that the first and major requirement of achieving freedom was the socio- political and educational reformation and unification of the Pakhtuns.<sup>16</sup> His socio- political and educational steps developed into the creation of a constitutional political movement named as Khudai Khidmatgar in 1929 which spread rapidly and became popular throughout the North- West Frontier region.

## **2.1 Political Conditions in the North West Frontier Province**

Political events and activities during the first decade after the creation of the province made sure the nationalist sentiments burning in the province. Peshawar Valley proved as a center for ensuring the political struggle alive against the British rule in the province. While the Pakhtuns tribes have been resisting the British militarily in the tribal area and took active part in the Third Anglo- Afghan War (1919), the educated and urbanized people within the settled areas of the frontier started challenging the British rule politically. The struggle gradually developed into a full-fledged nationalist struggle in 1929.

The initial political struggle and events until the World War 1 were confined mainly to the Peshawar Valley. However, the traditional elite of the rural areas and educated youth in the province were keenly observing the political situation and started an independent struggle keeping in view the pathetic socio- political and economic situation in the Pakhtun society. They also witnessed that the British were deliberately trying to keep them backward and less developed in all walks of life and not extending the Minto-Morley political reforms of 1909 to

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would only culminate in the destruction of his own people. For more details see Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand au Jaddo Jehad*, pp. 87-100

<sup>16</sup> Ibid; 102



the province proved their hypothesis as true. Similarly, the reforms of 1919 were extended to all the provinces and exception was made in the case of NWFP.<sup>17</sup> There were no elections, no ministry, no legislature and no franchise for the people of the NWFP.<sup>18</sup> Even, in the provinces where reforms were introduced, it neither affected the center's control of the provinces nor given real powers to the elected members. It was a strategy to give some sort of authority to those who cooperated with the administration rather than giving power to those who demanded reforms.<sup>19</sup> The North West Frontier province was considered as gun powder magazine by the British and that any political reforms could further destabilize the region.<sup>20</sup> In the words of Clement Atlee, "the right of a person to smoke a cigarette must be curtailed if he lives in a powder magazine".<sup>21</sup> The Montagu- Chelmsford reforms (1919) were extended to the NWFP in 1932 only after the province exploded under the nationalist revolt in the beginning of 1930.<sup>22</sup> The first group of people in the NWFP who struggled against the British with nationalist sentiments were Hindus living in the Peshawar district and had attended the Congress sessions before the creation of the province in 1901. Amir Chand was the first person who established a nationalist newspaper, the *Frontier Advocate* in Urdu in 1905.<sup>23</sup> Ram Chand formed the provincial branch of the Indian national Congress in 1907.<sup>24</sup> However, it was suppressed at the beginning and the leadership was sent to prison for one year as no political activity was allowed in the province under the notorious Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR).<sup>25</sup> After their release from jail, Ram Chand and his friends decided about starting revolutionary activities through

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<sup>17</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang* Pashto, (Peshawar: Idara Ishahat-i- Sarhad, nd), 109

<sup>18</sup> D.G. Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan: Faith is a Battle*, (Bombay: Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1967), 27

<sup>19</sup> Adeel Khan, *Politics of Identity: Ethnic Nationalism and the state in Pakistan*, (New Delhi: Saga Publications, 2005), 58

<sup>20</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang*, 109

<sup>21</sup> Brandon, "*Ramparts of Empire*", 60

<sup>22</sup> Ibid;

<sup>23</sup> Rittenberg, "*The Independence Movement in India's North- West Frontier, 1901- 1947*", 56

<sup>24</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism*, 17

<sup>25</sup> Ibid;



assassinations and sabotage activities.<sup>26</sup> Without carrying out the plan, Ram Chand fled to the United States in 1912 leaving his friends underground who continued sending weapons to other revolutionaries in India from the tribal areas of the Frontier. They were also helping the Indian political leaders who wanted to escape to Afghanistan from the wrath of the British Indian authorities.<sup>27</sup>

Another serious attempt aiming at getting rid of the British was made from an educated Muslim, Syed Ali Abbas Bukhari, who formed the NWFP branch of the Muslim League for the first time in 1912. He became the first general secretary and Mian Abdul Aziz became its president.<sup>28</sup> However, this organization was anti British and urged the Muslims to fight against the British for their anti Muslim policies in Turkey.<sup>29</sup> The provincial authorities could not tolerate these activities and the organization was declared illegal and leadership arrested. While the former student of Oxford University and general secretary of the provincial Muslim League, Ali Abbas succeeded in escaping to Afghanistan, Mian Abdul Aziz became the president of All India Muslim League in 1933.<sup>30</sup> Banning of political organizations and arresting the leaders led people to change the political resistance into armed resistance against the British in the province. As a result, the tribal areas would become a battle ground between the British and the Nationalists on the one hand and the Nationalists and the British loyalists on the other. The *Jihad* in the area would give a chance to the British authorities in the tribal agencies to take advantage of the collective responsibility of the Frontier Crimes Regulation and the freedom of the tribes curtailed.

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<sup>26</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement in India's North- West Frontier, 1901- 1947", 56

<sup>27</sup> Ibid;

<sup>28</sup> Ibid; 57

<sup>29</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 17

<sup>30</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement, 57



## 2.2 Abdul Ghaffar Khan's visits to the Tribal Territories

After curbing political activities and banning political organizations in Peshawar Valley, some important Pakhtun religious leaders in the rural areas of the province tried to establish *Azad madrassas* in order to inculcate religious education among the Pakhtun children and the spirit of patriotism. Fazli Wahid popularly known as Haji Sahib of Turangzai, Fazal Mahmud Makhfi and Maulana Abdul Aziz were the first who started establishing *Azad madrassas*. Abdul Ghaffar Khan also used to visit the rural areas of the province along with these religious social reformers out of his love for his people.<sup>31</sup> It was considered as an alternative to the British introduced English education since that system of education was looked down upon by the general Pakhtun population for religious reasons and the local *mullahs* discouraged them not to send their children to the British schools. Abdul Ghaffar Khan used to ask the *Mullahs* that if you forbade people not to send their children to the British introduced schools, then you should establish your own schools.<sup>32</sup> The literacy rate in the province was dismal. According to the 1911 census report, only 25 out of one thousand male could be considered as literate.<sup>33</sup> Fazal Mahmud Makhfi of Bajaur area who after completing his modern education from Islamia and Edward college Peshawar simultaneously left for Deoband and acquired religious learnings under the discipleship of Shaikh- ul- Hind, Mehmud- ul- Hassan.<sup>34</sup> On his return from India in 1910, he met Fazli Wahid or Haji of Turangzai in Charsadda who had also participated in the 1897 tribal revolt under Hadda *mullah* (Jalalabad) and returned to Charsadda in 1908 and started educational and social reformation of the society for six years.<sup>35</sup> Together with Abdul Ghaffar Khan and

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<sup>31</sup> Ahmad, *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, Pashto, Vol.1, (Peshawar: University Book Agency, 1991), 5

<sup>32</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 22

<sup>33</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 8

<sup>34</sup> Fazal Zaman Shalman, *Moulvi Fazal Mehmood Makhfi*, Pashto, (Peshawar: Aamir Print and Publishers, 2016), 14  
See also Fazal ur Rahim Saqi, *Khudai Khidmatgar* Pashto, (Peshawar: Bacha Khan Research Centre, 2012), 62

<sup>35</sup> Alan Stephen Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, (North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 1988), 57



Fazal Mahmud, he established the first Azad School at Charsadda in 1910.<sup>36</sup> Haji of Turangzai, Fazal Mahmud, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Abdul Akbar Khan, Moulvi Taj Mohammad, Moulvi Fazal Rabbi and Moulvi Abul Aziz decided to persuade the Pakhtuns for getting education and started establishing Azad *madrassas* or religious seminaries.<sup>37</sup> As a result of the joint venture against illiteracy, they succeeded in establishing fifty seminaries and according to official record, thirty four *madrassas* were established in Peshawar and Mardan.<sup>38</sup> From 1911 to 1920, a considerable improvement was noticed in education and the ratio of twenty five per thousand persons reached to 43 per thousand.<sup>39</sup> In addition to establishing Azad schools, Haji of Turangzai also concentrated on social and religious reforms.<sup>40</sup>

The Haji of Turangzai urged the Pakhtuns to give up their tribal feuds and improve social habits and avoid spending lavishly on marriages and other events.<sup>41</sup> He preached the people to decide their disputes according to *Shariah* (Islamic Law) and to avoid the English laws introduced by the British. He was throughout assisted and supported by Abdul Ghaffar Khan who later became a popular nationalist leader of the NWFP and continued a joint struggle with the Indian National Congress for the freedom of India.<sup>42</sup> The British authorities decided to ban the activities of Haji of Turangzai and to arrest him but he succeeded in escaping to the tribal territory in April 1915 and attacked the British forces several times from Mohmand area till his death in 1937.<sup>43</sup> His other associates also escaped with him and Abdul Ghaffar Khan remained in Peshawar in order to communicate between them and the *Ulema* of Deoband in India.

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<sup>36</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement, 59

<sup>37</sup> Shalman, *Moulvi Fazal Mehmood Makhfi*, 25

<sup>38</sup> Aziz Javid, *Haji Sahb Turangzai: Bar-i- Sagheer ki Tehrik-i- Azadi ka aik Azeem Mujahid*, Urdu, (Lahore: Idara tehqiq wo Tasnif Pakistan, 1981), 76

<sup>39</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 9

<sup>40</sup> Javid, *Haji Sahb Turangzai: Bar-i- Sagheer ki Tehrik-i- Azadi ka aik Azeem Mujahid*, 76

<sup>41</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 18

<sup>42</sup> Fazal ur Rahim Saqi. *Khudai Khidmatgar*, Pashto, (Peshawar: Bacha Khan Research Centre, 2012), 62

<sup>43</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 18



Abdul Ghaffar Khan used to visit Darul Uloom-i- Deoband once or twice in a year along with Fazal Mahmud to meet Maulana Mehmood- ul- Hassan and Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi and would discuss ways to get rid of the British. In January 1914, after a lengthy discussion between them Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Fazal Mahmud were sent to the semi independent tribal area for finding a suitable place where *mujahidin* could be trained and equipped with weapons for fighting the British.<sup>44</sup> By this time, the political agents and their loyalists in the tribal agencies in the form of *maliks* and *mullahs* were very active about events in the tribal areas.<sup>45</sup> The British political agent of Malakand agency was very strict and would arrest and severely punish the people on the basis of doubt and without any proof. No one could dare to speak against the British in public and in private due to the network of British informants.<sup>46</sup> The official sources shows that prior to the partition of India in 1947, the central government of India had been spending forty million on the watch and ward policy in the tribal areas including 900,000 allowances given to the pro British *maliks* and *mullahs* and only ten million on projects related to well-being of the tribesmen.<sup>47</sup> It was a popular perception that the common people would fear the political agent more than God.<sup>48</sup> The objective behind their visit to the area was pan-Islamic in nature in order to weaken the British Indian empire. Together with Fazal Mahmud, Abdul Ghaffar Khan visited various places in Bajaur and Mohmand tribal territory for finding a suitable place for *jihad*.<sup>49</sup> They stayed in the tribal area for several weeks and called upon Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi but the scheme could not materialize at the planned time for unknown

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<sup>44</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 24

<sup>45</sup> Abdul Ghaffar. *Zama Zhwand au Jaddo Jehad*, 89

<sup>46</sup> Shalman, *Moulvi Fazal Mehmood Makhfi*, 27

<sup>47</sup> Juma Khan Sufi, "Reflections: The Challenge of FATA and Security of Pakistan", *Institute of Strategic Studies*, Islamabad, No. 1, (2015), 3

<sup>48</sup> Abdul Ghaffar. *Zama Zhwand au Jaddo*, 89

<sup>49</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 24



reasons. Maulana Ubaidullah could not reach the area and Abdul Ghaffar Khan had to come back to Peshawar unsuccessfully as the final decision was to be taken by the former.<sup>50</sup>

Meanwhile, the First World War had begun in July 1914 and Haji Sahib of Turangzai was at that time staying in Buneir tribal area of Malakand and received messages from Mahmud-ul- Hassan and Ubaidullah Sindhi to raise a rebellion in the tribal area and also to prepare the Afghan Amir, Habibullah Khan to allow the Turco- German mission in the tribal territory.<sup>51</sup> They wanted to organize the frontier tribes against the British in order to engage and weaken its forces with the support of Turkey.<sup>52</sup> However, due to the Anglo- Russian alliance against Germany and Turkey before the Communist revolution in 1917, and weak position of Afghanistan between the two powerful empires, the Afghan Amir felt reluctance in declaring open hostility against British India.<sup>53</sup> However, the brother of the Afghan Amir, Nusrullah Khan and third son of the Amir, Amanullah Khan who later on became the Afghan King in 1919 were more sympathetic with the Indian revolutionaries and the Turco- German mission in Afghanistan. The Amir after consulting the like minded and fearing the wrath of the British and Russia declared neutrality of Afghanistan during the war. The British Indian government threatened the Afghan Amir, Habibullah Khan of dire consequences for hosting foreign missions and Indian rebels. The mission either failed and decided to leave Afghanistan or pressurized to leave in 1916.

Afterwards, Abdul Ghaffar Khan joined Haji Sahib of Turangzai in Bunir tribal territory.<sup>54</sup> He observed that the local *mullahs* who were in the habit of receiving regular British allowances were not happy with the presence of Haji of Turangzai and the *mujahidin* and conspiring that the

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid;

<sup>51</sup> Abdul Ghaffar. *Zama Zhwand*, 96

<sup>52</sup> Sana Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, (London: Hurst & Company Publishers, 2007), 103

<sup>53</sup> Sufi, "Reflections: The Challenge of FATA and Security of Pakistan", 6

<sup>54</sup> Ibid;



Haji of Turangzai should either wage *jihad* against the British or leave the area.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, the Frontier tribes were disorganized and poverty stricken with no advance weapons. They could not wage a war against the powerful British army. To Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the British initially tried to persuade Haji of Turangzai through local *Khans* and elders for coming back to the settled areas. After his rejection of coming back to the settled area, he was compelled through the loyal *mullahs* of the area to start a war before organizing other tribes and be defeated at the earliest.<sup>56</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan advised him to wait for the time being and to unite all the tribes for waging a full fledged war and that the tribes would be in need of latest weapons from India. Compelled by the circumstances, Haji of Turangzai had to declare *jihad* against the British without the support of all the tribes and with very few weapons. As a result, he was defeated and escaped to Mohmand area through Swat and Bajaur. The advantage of this adventure to the British was that the Bunir territory was formally annexed and all the *madrassas* were closed down with their teachers arrested and sent to D.I. Khan jail without any trial. Haji Sahib of Turangzai attacked the British installations from time to time until his death in 1937 particularly in response to the brutalities of the British authorities over the political workers of Khudai Khidmatgar Movement.

### **2.3 The Rowlatt Act and the third Anglo- Afghan War**

The year 1919 proved more volatile due to certain happenings in British India and Afghanistan. This year was full of anxiety for the British because of the political situation in India and the Afghan invasion of British India that happened simultaneously.<sup>57</sup> The isolation of the province from the political scene of India was coming to an end.<sup>58</sup> The trouble on the Frontier came not from the tribal area rather the settled districts of the province owing to the growing unrest in

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<sup>55</sup> Abdul Ghaffar. *Zama Zhwand*, 98

<sup>56</sup> Ibid; 99

<sup>57</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 30

<sup>58</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 67



India as a result of the Rowlatt Act.<sup>59</sup> In order to curb the revolutionary activities in India, the British central government passed the notorious Rowlatt Act in February according to which an accused could be sent to jail without any trial keeping in view the war time situation. All the Indians denounced the bill including Gandhi, Patel and Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Gandhi asked the people across India for strike on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1919.<sup>60</sup> Complete strike was observed throughout India including Peshawar. Protest meetings were arranged by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Protests and rallies against the British government were held in everywhere. The British too retaliated with bullets and mass killings. The news of the massacre by the British troops at Jallianwala, Amritsar on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1919 also reached the NWFP. The Pakhtuns of Peshawar valley retaliated by holding a huge protest where Abdul Ghaffar Khan also delivered an impressive speech at the occasion. Around 70,000 people participated in the protest against the repressive policies of the British *Raj*.<sup>61</sup> People from Bannu, Kohat and D.I. Khan were present in this gathering.<sup>62</sup> This was the first time where people of the NWFP showed their solidarity with the Indians in such a large number. The British desire of keeping the people across Indus isolated from the rest of India failed utterly.<sup>63</sup> The British who had kept the NWFP as apolitical were shocked by observing the anti- Rowlatt Act protests in Peshawar.<sup>64</sup> Even, the loyalist *Khans* and *Nawabs* were criticizing the bill and the brutality of the British. The Chief Commissioner of the province, Roose Kepple wrote to Sir John Maffey on 8<sup>th</sup> May that: “The effect of the Rowlatt Act agitation has been extraordinary, and I am receiving petitions from

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<sup>59</sup> Brandon, *Ramparts of Empire*, 61

<sup>60</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 18

<sup>61</sup> Ibid; 19, Ghaffar Khan has told the number as more than hundred thousand and thousands of women participated for the first time, See Abdul Ghaffar. *Zama Zhwand au Jaddo Jihad*, 117

<sup>62</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang*, 21

<sup>63</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 28

<sup>64</sup> Brandon, *Ramparts of Empire*, 61.



every tribe and community in the district, the biggest men have signed these, including those who are on our side”.<sup>65</sup>

The political situation in India and the Indian revolutionaries present at Kabul also influenced events in Afghanistan. King Amanullah Khan had ascended the throne of Kabul in February 1919 after the murder of his father, Amir Habibullah Khan. The entente between Russia and British India had also ended in 1917 after the Russian Revolution. On 4<sup>th</sup> May, he declared war against British India.<sup>66</sup> The people of the North West Frontier were called to rise in rebellion against the British.<sup>67</sup> The uprising in the province was suppressed by imposing Martial Law in the province on 8<sup>th</sup> May and Peshawar was occupied by the British troops.<sup>68</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan was recently released after arrest for establishing Azad schools on the pattern of Haji Sahib of Turangzai.<sup>69</sup> He called on the people for protests against the British. Afterwards, a number of arrests of the political workers were made and sent to various jails.<sup>70</sup>

Abdul Ghaffar Khan along with his friends escaped to the Mohmand tribal territory in order to proceed to Afghanistan. However, his father followed and convinced him along with his associates to go back to Utmanzai (his home town) instead of going to Afghanistan. The police after knowing about their presence in Mardan arrested, handcuffed and sent them to the jail in fetters.<sup>71</sup> The actual reason behind their arrest was the protests with large number of people against Rowlatt Act and Jallianwala massacre. The Afghan invasion of the British territories was an additional factor that added to the political awakening of the people in the province. It was the first time where the British observed peaceful protests in such huge number in rural areas of

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid;

<sup>66</sup> Muhammad Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, S 47

<sup>67</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 19

<sup>68</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 68

<sup>69</sup> Saqi, *Khudai Khidmatgar*, 62

<sup>70</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 19

<sup>71</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 29



NWFP which were unheard before. Observing such political gatherings in the presence of FCR was equal to challenging the British rule. FCR did not allow any political assembly. In the tribal areas, political gatherings are not allowed to the present day. The agitation did unleashed great social and economic hardships upon the people of the NWFP, but it brought out the people from their political slumber.<sup>72</sup> Rumors at the time were spread that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was hanged.<sup>73</sup> After the arrests, the British troops surrounded the rural area of Peshawar including the home town of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Utmanzai in Charsadda on 13<sup>th</sup> May.<sup>74</sup> A fine equal to two years of land revenue was levied on the people.<sup>75</sup> The Chief Commissioner Roos Keppel, who was a sympathetic administrator towards the Pakhtuns released them after spending six months in prison.

The Frontier tribes also did not remain indifferent to the events in the Frontier and played active role against the British.<sup>76</sup> The overall situation in the Frontier tribes during the First World War remained peaceful and under control.<sup>77</sup> However, they were already against the British rule and rose to the call of the Afghan Amir Amanullah Khan in May 1919. The British knew well that the immediate causes of disturbances among the tribes were Islam and Kabul, the real motivator was their instinct for independence.<sup>78</sup> Until 1914, the Afridis of Khyber were peaceful at large but there were many cases of desertions during the War and refused to fight for the British due to religious reasons. Many cases of desertions were reported in Waziristan during the war.<sup>79</sup> Probably, they might have influenced by the events in Bunir and Mohmand areas, where Haji of

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<sup>72</sup> Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, 132

<sup>73</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 31

<sup>74</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement", 61

<sup>75</sup> Ibid;

<sup>76</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 47

<sup>77</sup> Brandon, *Ramparts of Empire*, 42

<sup>78</sup> Ibid; 38

<sup>79</sup> The British official record at the India Office tells about dozens of desertions in the Wazir tribe of FR Bannu and the Afridi tribesmen of Khyber agency. See also Tripodi, *Edge of Empire*, 149



Turangzai along with his colleagues was not only engaged with the British militarily but also preached against supporting the War efforts of the British. The recruitment of Afridis was stopped during the War.<sup>80</sup> Some of the Afridis in the Khyber Rifles shot their officers dead.<sup>81</sup> The Khyber Rifles Force was completely disbanded. The general population of the Frontier remained less interested and less excited on the British victory against Germany and Turkey.<sup>82</sup> Owing to the desertions during the war and to fight the British, most of the Afridis were excluded from the military service for a long time.<sup>83</sup>

The attempted Afghan invasion of the British annexed territories and anti-British agitation in the Frontier engaged many of them with the British.<sup>84</sup> The Afghan army fought successfully with the active support of the tribes particularly in Waziristan and Kurram agency.<sup>85</sup> The sub division of Kohat, Tall was occupied by the Afghan forces and the Frontier tribes.<sup>86</sup> The demand of the Afghan Amir that the Pakhtuns should support his invasion of British India was impossible for them to ignore.<sup>87</sup> Surely, the tribes who fought for Amanullah were also in financial support from the Afghan Amir as was the case with the tribes and *maliks* who were recipient of subsidies and allowances from the British.<sup>88</sup> The Anglo- Afghan war further encouraged the Frontier tribes.<sup>89</sup> The hostilities between the British Indian government and Afghanistan came to an end with the result of giving independence to the later by the former after signing a treaty on 17<sup>th</sup> August at Rawalpindi. The political prisoners in the province were released from prisons. The Khyber Rifles Force in Khyber agency was reinstated after the peace treaty with Amanullah

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<sup>80</sup> S. Iftikhar Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes along the Pak-Afghan Border*, 35

<sup>81</sup> Brandon, *Ramparts of Empire*, 40

<sup>82</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 27

<sup>83</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 62

<sup>84</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang*, 28

<sup>85</sup> Sufi, "Reflections: The Challenge of FATA", 7

<sup>86</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 47

<sup>87</sup> Tripodi, "Negotiating with the Enemy", 595

<sup>88</sup> Ibid;

<sup>89</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 50



Khan where he was recognized as the King of Afghanistan with an independent Afghan foreign policy.<sup>90</sup> However, the British miseries did not come to an end. The events of First World War (1914- 1919) and the Anglo- Afghan war (1919) proved as precursors for major uprisings in the Indian sub continent in the form of Khilafat and Hijrat movements and the formation of a broad-based Khudai Khidmatgar Movement in the North West Frontier Province which will extend its roots not only to the southern districts of Kohat, Bannu, D.I. Khan and the tribal areas but Afghanistan as well. The Pakhtun tribes across the Durand Line in Afghanistan kept Abdul Ghaffar Khan in high esteem due to his role for the people of the region.

## **2.4 Khilafat and Hijrat Movement**

The agitation against the Rowlatt Act and Jallianwala massacre had swept across the NWFP to the hilly tribes.<sup>91</sup> The subsequent Khilafat and Hijrat Movements shaped the future political events in the province. After lifting Martial Law at the end of May 1919, the Indian Muslims had started Khilafat Movement as they were anxious about the fate of Turkey and Khalifa whom they considered as the spiritual leader of all the Muslims.<sup>92</sup> The Indian Muslims demanded that the Khalifa should be allowed to have control over Arabia and Palestine that have Muslim holy places. During the war, the British had assured the Indian Muslims that the religious places of the Muslims would be protected.<sup>93</sup> However, at the end of the war, the Muslim caliphate was also brought to an end and the Ottoman Empire confined to a small kingdom.<sup>94</sup> The British annexed Iraq, Palestine and all the Arab lands. Palestine was given in control of the Jewish colonialists.<sup>95</sup>

The Indian Muslims established Khilafat Committees throughout India for protecting the

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<sup>90</sup> Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes*, 36

<sup>91</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 28

<sup>92</sup> Brandon, *Ramparts of Empire*, 64

<sup>93</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 19

<sup>94</sup> Khan, Abdul Wali Khan, *The Struggle and the Aftermath*, Vol. 1, (Peshawar: Bacha Khan Trust Research Center, 2011), 56

<sup>95</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 28



interests of the Ottoman Empire. The Indian National Congress supported the demands of the Muslims and agreed to make an alliance for political reasons. The prominent Muslim leader, Maulana Mohammad Ali Jouhar succeeded in winning the support of the Hindu majority and both the communities came on a common platform against the British. On 17 October 1919, the Indian Muslims observed the Khilafat day and suspended all sort of business.<sup>96</sup> The leaders of the Khilafat movement advised the people not to participate in the official peace celebrations of rejoicing on 13<sup>th</sup> December.

At the beginning of 1920, a Khilafat conference at Delhi was called on by the Khilafat leaders for all the Indians in which Abdul Ghaffar Khan also participated.<sup>97</sup> A delegation of 34 prominent Khilafitists under the leadership of Mohammad Ali Johar, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Hasrat Mohani, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Shaukat Ali, M.K. Gandhi and Dr. M.A. Ansari decided to meet the Viceroy Lord Chelmsford on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 1920 and sent another deputation to London on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1920.<sup>98</sup> However, they failed to get support for Turkey and the victor powers were preparing for the division of Ottoman Empire. Khilafat committees were formed for propagating the cause of Turkey. All the Indian leaders decided to hold protests and boycott all foreign commodities. As a result of their failure and British rejection of their demands, a formal non- cooperation movement was launched by Gandhi on 1<sup>st</sup> August, 1920 by overwhelming majority. It was the time where Muhammad Ali Jinnah left the Congress.<sup>99</sup> The movement started for a non Indian issue, but changed into an Indian political demand for independence.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *North-West Frontier Province: History and Politics*, 41

<sup>97</sup> Abdul Ghaffar. *Zama Zhwand*, 141 See also Tendulkar, 32

<sup>98</sup> Shah, *North-West Frontier Province*, 41-42

<sup>99</sup> Abdul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, (New Delhi: Orient Longman Limited, 1959), 11

<sup>100</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1992), 7



The Khilafat movement also spread to every city and town of the North West Frontier Province. First protests were observed in Mansehra and Peshawar.<sup>101</sup> Sayed Maqbool Shah was the provincial president, Zakariya Khan as vice president and Abdul Karim as joint secretary. Khilafat committees were also formed in every district of the province. Peshawar was center of all the activities.<sup>102</sup> Public meetings were arranged after every Friday prayers and all members of the committees were allowed to speak in favor of Turkey and emphasized on boycott of British goods. The intensity of the Khilafat was greater in Bannu due to the religious sensitivities of the people. A public gathering was arranged in Bannu city where a large number of Bannuchi and Wazir tribes participated. A retired police inspector, Mohizullah was elected as its president with Hakim Abdur Rahim as secretary.<sup>103</sup> Around seventy members including Salar Yahqoob Khan and Fazal Qadir who later became prominent members of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement were selected from different villages to establish their local Khilafat committees.<sup>104</sup> Fazal Qadir along with seventy other protesters were massacred at FR Bannu, Spin Tangi during a peaceful protest in April 1930 after Civil disobedience was started by the Khudai Khidmatgars together with the Indian National Congress.

The prominent members in Bannu would regularly get *Al Hilal* newspaper of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who in turn would inform the general public of the events and political conditions in the rest of India. The local Khilafat committees started deciding all kinds of religious, social and economic issues on daily basis instead of going to the British courts for solving their

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<sup>101</sup> Nadia Bashir, "A Review of Political Awakening in the NWFP: 1901- 1947", *Pakistan Annual Research Journal*, Vol. 39, (2013), 63

<sup>102</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 68

<sup>103</sup> Khan, Gul Ayub, "*Tareekhi-i- Bannu waziristan*", Peshawar: Azeem Publishing Agency, 1969, p. 70. See also, Rittenberg, Alan Stephen. *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2016, p. 68.

<sup>104</sup> Gul Ayub Khan, *Tareekhi-i- Bannu waziristan*, (Peshawar: Azeem Publishing Agency, 1969), 71



disputes. Majority of the Hindus also used to decide their disputes through these committees.<sup>105</sup> Its leaders were arrested in March 1920 and again in May 1922.<sup>106</sup> From 1920 to 1924, the British cantonments and courts were boycotted completely.<sup>107</sup> When the three leaders Barrister Jan Muhammad, Hakim Abdur Rahim and Makin Khuda Bakhsh were arrested and sent to jail for three years along with 90 other Khilafitists, the protests increased in its intensity. According to the investigative report of 1922, the British troops on 20<sup>th</sup> May, entered the houses in Mamash Khel, Mohmand Khel and Daud Khel in Bannu by ignoring sanctity of the houses and females, looted everything they found.<sup>108</sup> In addition to killing six Khilafitists, standing crops were destroyed.<sup>109</sup> The annual sixty three thousand rupees expenses for managing three military check posts in the area were regularly collected from the poor villagers and sympathizers of the Khilafat Movement as penalty in Bannu during the Khilafat movement.<sup>110</sup> However, these Khilafat Committees survived until they became the core of Khudai Khidmatgar Movement in 1929 and the broad based of Indian National Congress.<sup>111</sup>

After the final British decision of dissecting the Ottoman empire into pieces, the Indian Khilafat leaders declared India as *Dar-ul- Harb* (land of war) and issued *fatwas* (religious verdicts) that it was obligatory on all the Indian Muslims to give up everything and migrate to *Dar-ul- Islam*

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<sup>105</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 72

<sup>106</sup> Ibid; 68

<sup>107</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity*, 68

<sup>108</sup> Gul Ayub, *Tareekh-i- Bannu waziristan*, 78

<sup>109</sup> Ibid;

<sup>110</sup> Ibid;

<sup>111</sup> Most of the prominent tribal elders in the rural areas of Bannu, Kohat and D.I.Khan were Pakhtuns and freedom loving Muslims. This fact was also recognized by the British local leaders as they treated them differently and inhumanly from those of the political workers in the rest of India. In the later years, these leaders and workers became the leading Khudai Khidmatgars in their respective areas. Abdul Ghaffar Khan used to visit the common and remote villages in Bannu, meet these local leaders and train them for a non- violent struggle. They were regularly told not to resort to violence as this was their main cause of destruction. Even today, the main chowk in Domail Bazar (Bannu) is written and named as Bacha Khan (Ghaffar Khan) chowk by the common people due to their love with the later. See also Gul Ayub, *Tareekh-i- Bannu Waziristan*, 83 and Mohib Wazir, *Thal Waziro key Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, (Peshawar: University Book Agency, 2014).



(land of Islam).<sup>112</sup> The dismemberment of Turkey stirred up the Frontier people both in the districts and tribal belt.<sup>113</sup> All those who wanted to migrate to Afghanistan had to go through the Khilafat committee of Peshawar through Khyber Pass in Khyber agency.<sup>114</sup> The first bulk of refugees came from Sindh followed by a large majority from the rural areas of the NWFP.<sup>115</sup> In the NWFP, the *mullahs* had issued a *fatwa* which said that those who would not leave for *Hijrat* to Afghanistan will have to divorce their wives.<sup>116</sup> The first group of *Muhajireen* (refuges) from Central Punjab, Delhi and Peshawar reached on 7<sup>th</sup> May, 1920 and the number soon rose to 60,000 people.<sup>117</sup> While passing through Peshawar and Khyber Pass, the Afridis and other local tribes of Khyber agency gave them hospitality by arranging meals and what ever help they could afford for the relief of the refuges.<sup>118</sup> The people from Bannu went through the headquarters of North Waziristan, Miranshah who were facilitated by the local people.<sup>119</sup> All these people had left their belongings or sold it on nominal prices. The Afghan monarch, Amanullah Khan welcomed these refuges.

The British Indian authorities initially wanted to discourage the people leaving for Afghanistan as they fear the link between *Hijrat* (migration) and *Jihad* (holy war).<sup>120</sup> However, the provincial government under the new Chief Commissioner, Hamilton Grant encouraged them as they knew that the exodus of refugees would be difficult for Amanullah Khan to manage and his calculations proved right. Amanullah Khan, on 9<sup>th</sup> August suspended the migration for the time being as he wanted to create a colony for the refugees and to give them cultivable land and

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<sup>112</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 32

<sup>113</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 28

<sup>114</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 32

<sup>115</sup> Brandon, *Ramparts of Empire*, 65

<sup>116</sup> Nadia Bashir, "A Review of Political Awakening", 63

<sup>117</sup> Shah, *North-West Frontier*, 47

<sup>118</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang*, 36

<sup>119</sup> Ibid;

<sup>120</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 32



employment.<sup>121</sup> However, the British spies within the refugees demanded from the Afghan King to declare war against the British. The reply of Amanullah Khan to the refugees was that he had no strength of fighting the British and that after properly settling them; he would extend all possible help to those who wished to fight the British.<sup>122</sup> It was impossible at that difficult time for the Afghan King to declare war since his government was weak and had very recently waged a war against the British and concluded a peace treaty. A colony was allotted for their settlement in Jabal-ul- Siraj under the Indian Emigration Committee consisting of sixteen members. However, they became disheartened and started returning to India. The *Hijrat* Movement badly failed and ended in fiasco. Unfortunately, those people who preached *Hijrat* to Afghanistan did not participate themselves and only exploited the religious sentiments of the common masses that led to their socio- economic destruction. The All India Khilafat leaders had no future plan about the fate of the refugees after the large migration of people to Afghanistan. The leaders that gave *fatwas* for *Hijrat* only wanted to pressurize the British for accepting their demands.<sup>123</sup>

Abdul Ghaffar Khan had also led a large convoy of refugees through Mohmand area to Afghanistan and was one of the organizers in the Khilafat committee that represented the Central Khilafat committee of India.<sup>124</sup> He was accompanied by his close friends Abbas Khan, Khan Muhammad, Qalander Khan and others who later played active role in his socio- political reformative movement.<sup>125</sup> While in Afghanistan, Abdul Ghaffar Khan met King Amanullah and was surprised to know that the Afghan King who himself a Pakhtun was capable of speaking many languages but not his mother tongue, Pashto.<sup>126</sup> The conversation of Abdul Ghaffar Khan

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<sup>121</sup> Brandon, *Ramparts of Empire*, 66

<sup>122</sup> Shah. *North-West*, 47

<sup>123</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan, *Zama Zhwand au Jaddo Jehad*, (Peshawar, nd), 143

<sup>124</sup> Khaliq. *Dha Azady Jang* 37

<sup>125</sup> Ahmad. *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, Pashto, Vol.1, (Peshawar: University Book Agency, 1991), 6

<sup>126</sup> Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, 147



impressed Amanullah Khan and he learnt Pashto in a much lesser time.<sup>127</sup> Some of Ghaffar Khan's close colleagues who were involved with him in the socio- educational activities in the province left for Soviet Russia. At the time of leaving Afghanistan, Abdul Ghaffar Khan also consulted the Afghan army chief Nadir Khan who became King himself in 1929 killing Bacha Saqao who usurped the throne after the abdication of Amanullah Khan when large scale protests of the tribes across the Durand Line erupted against his secular reformative policies. Abdul Ghaffar Khan informed the Afghan army chief about his plan of establishing Azad *madrassas* in tribal territory which was appreciated by the Afghan officials.<sup>128</sup> He also tried to unify the tribes in Bajaur agency against the British but he did not succeed in organizing the tribes.<sup>129</sup> After leaving Bajaur, Abdul Ghaffar Khan established a school at Khaloona in Dir with the active support of local villagers. The *madrassa* attracted more than three hundred students within a short span of time. However, the Nawab of Dir under pressure from the British political agent of Malakand agency closed the *madrassa*. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Fazal Mehmood Makhfi were expelled from the area.<sup>130</sup> He returned to his home town Utmanzai for resuming and reorganizing the schools in the NWFP which were closed down by the British after the escape of the Haji of Turangzai to Mohmand area for *jihad* in 1915.

## 2.5 Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Origin of Khudai Khidmatgar Movement

All the political happenings in India, Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier from 1910 to the end of the Khilafat and Hijrat Movement were influencing Abdul Ghaffar Khan and he was actively engaged in the struggle against the imperialists along with other nationalist religious

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<sup>127</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 33

<sup>128</sup> Ibid;

<sup>129</sup> Ahmad, *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, 6

<sup>130</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, "Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Congress and the Partition of India", *Pakistan Vision*, Vol. 8, No. 2, (nd), 91



leaders. Apart from his active participation against the British, he was gathering Pakhtun nationalist friends in Charsadda for starting a socio- political and educational movement in the province. The Khudai Khidmatgar Movement in September 1929 was the result of long struggle along with his like minded people. The instinct behind his entire struggle was love for freedom by uniting the people and forcing the British to leave the region. He himself explains in his autobiography that after fifteen years of struggle, I reached the conclusion that a revolution could not be brought in months rather it would require a long struggle of committed persons for hundred years. His life and struggle bears witness to this fact.

His association with the nationalist *Ulema* of Deoband and the Khilafat leaders together with his Pakhtun nationalist feelings gradually moved him away from adopting and supporting an armed struggle for a long term non violent socio- political and educational movement. Although, the Hijrat and Khilafat movement proved as a futile exercise which brought nothing to the people other than socio- economic destruction, it certainly increased the political awakening of the people in the NWFP. Abdul Ghaffar Khan realized that leaving India was not solution to the problem and he was impressed by the Afghan monarch, Amanullah Khan during his stay in Afghanistan that it was futile to run away from one's own area and taking refuge in any other country or Afghanistan.<sup>131</sup> However, he was opposed to any kind of secret organization against the state.<sup>132</sup>

After the failed attempt of *Hijrat* to Afghanistan, a new Khilafat committee was established with Maqbool Shah as president and a Sikh Sardar Gor Bakhsh Singh as its general secretary in Peshawar.<sup>133</sup> However, the *Hijrat* Committee rejected the authority of the new organization which paralyzed the movement in the province until the end of the 1920. The Central Khilafat

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<sup>131</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 141

<sup>132</sup> Ibid; 142

<sup>133</sup> Rittenberg, Stephen Alan, "The Independence Movement", 63- 64



leadership in Delhi intervened and dissolved both the committees. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was invited to Peshawar and made the president of the new Khilafat Committee.<sup>134</sup> His appointment as president of the new provincial committee gave an access to the rural areas of the province. He along with other colleagues extensively visited the whole province and established various local Khilafat committees in the rural areas. Throughout his tour in the province, he emphasized on the need to get rid of the British rule in the region. The government reacted to his objectionable speeches and decided to arrest the leaders and curb the movement.<sup>135</sup> The government subdued the movement with little force by arresting selective leaders starting with Abdul Ghaffar Khan in December 1921.<sup>136</sup> After three years of rigorous imprisonment from 1921 to 1924, Abdul Ghaffar Khan severed his relationship with the Khilafitists and decided to commit himself to the socio- educational reformation of the Pakhtun society and to prepare them for a political struggle with the active support of his like minded friends.

## **2.6 Anjuman-i- Islah-ul- Afaghana**

Before his arrest in December 1921, Abdul Ghaffar Khan along with Mian Abdullah Shah, Muhammad Abbas Khan, Abdul Akbar Khan, Mian Ahmad Shah, Abdul Akbar Khan, Faiz Muhammad Khan, Shah Nawaz Khan and others had set up an *Anjuman-i- Islah-ul- Afaghana* or society for reformation of the Afghans on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1921 through a national *Jirga* in Utmanzai Charsadda.<sup>137</sup> The leadership consisted of landed elite of the rural areas rather than the senior urbanized elite, intellectuals or professionals who were mostly co-opted by the British for influencing and controlling the people.<sup>138</sup> Most of them were educated patriots who wanted

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid;

<sup>135</sup> Shah, "Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Congress and the Partition of India", 92

<sup>136</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement", 64

<sup>137</sup> Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar, *Da Bar-i- Sagheer Pak Wo Hind Pa Azady key Da Pukhtano Barkha*, Pashto, (Peshawar: University Publishers, 2009), 10, Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and nationalism*, 21.

<sup>138</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement", 1



socio- political and educational reforms in the Pakhtun society. The immediate objective of the *Anjuman* (society) was to establish new Azad schools in addition to those which were opened under the guidance of Haji Sahib of Turangzai.<sup>139</sup> Other main objective was to work against social evils and to reform the Pakhtun society.<sup>140</sup> Creating general awareness for education, promotion of unity among the Pakhtuns, preaching against lavish spending on social events, encouragement of Pashto language and literature and creating real love for Islam were the concerns that brought together these educated Pakhtun intellectuals.<sup>141</sup> Although, modern education was already introduced in the province by the British Indian government through establishing schools, most of the Pakhtuns under the directions and guidance of conservative minded *mullahs* had already rejected it and who considered English education as opposed to the teachings of Islam.<sup>142</sup> Moreover, the British schools were insufficient for the vast majority of people and were concentrated in the big cities and towns which could not benefit the vast population in the rural areas of the province.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan was its first president and Mian Ahmad Shah as the secretary who was a graduate of Aligarh University.<sup>143</sup> The initial expenses were to be spent by all the members who founded the *Anjuman* or society according to their economic conditions starting from rupees fifty to five hundred.<sup>144</sup> This new organization developed into a strong body by opening various branches all over the province. Abdul Ghaffar Khan being president of the provincial Khilafat committee and senior leader of the society for the reformation of the Afghans used to undertake tours throughout the province for explaining the aims and objectives of the society. During all his tours he tried to concentrate more on education and preaching against social evils rather than

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<sup>139</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang*, 42

<sup>140</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 142

<sup>141</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 22

<sup>142</sup> Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, 4

<sup>143</sup> Shah, "Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Congress and the Partition", 92

<sup>144</sup> Akbar, *Da Bar-i- Sagheer*, 10-11



indulging in pure politics in order to ensure the government tolerance of his activities. At the same time, he was not apolitical.<sup>145</sup> In addition to preaching the importance of education, he tried to convince the people for taking other professions other than agriculture as the Pakhtuns were looking down at English education, trade and other business activities. He wanted to organize and unite the Pakhtuns through adopting modern education, ending tribal feuds and eradicating social evils like spending lavishly on marriage ceremonies. The conservative Pakhtun *mullahs* or religious clerics issued *fatwas* against Abdul Ghaffar Khan and sometimes declared him a *Wahabi* and *Qadyani*, but he did not bother about and continued his mission.<sup>146</sup> In his speeches, he was trying to reform them and also to politically awake the Pakhtuns against the British rule. His activities were objectionable and the Chief Commissioner of the province, Sir John Maffey warned him to abandon his tours or face the consequences. However, by the time he was arrested in December, 1921 and sentenced to three years rigorous imprisonment under the notorious FCR, he had toured almost every village of the province.<sup>147</sup> This was the time where most of the Muslim leaders were *Ulemas* and a speech without quoting Quran and Islamic traditions had little worth with the people in the province.<sup>148</sup> Issuing *Fatwas* were on its peak. There was no regular newspaper, magazine, radio and effective way of communication. However, the damages done to the socio- economic lives of the people as a result of the failed and ill fated *Hijat* movement had motivated the people to listen sympathetically to the educated members of the *Anjuman* who were now working for the unity of the people. Preaching unity among the Pakhtuns, emphasizing on their common origin, race, language and literature, their past history

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<sup>145</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement", 64.

<sup>146</sup> Ahmad. *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, 112

<sup>147</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 109

<sup>148</sup> Akbar, *Da Bar-i- Sagheer*", 16



and the miseries overlapping them were the beginning of a new and clear form of Pakhtun nationalism that impressed and inspired the Pakhtuns in the rural areas of the province.

For giving practical shape to the objectives of the *Anjuman*, the immediate step was establishing Azad school at Utmanzai in April 1921 followed by other branches in the settled areas of Peshawar valley. He was born at a time where the whole province had less than hundred matriculates.<sup>149</sup> The schools which were closed during the First World War by the British were reopened.<sup>150</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan admitted his two sons Abdul Wali Khan and Abdul Ghani Khan who later played active role after independence in the Pakistani politics and all other members of the *Anjuman* followed him by sending their children to the school at Utmanzai. The curriculum for the schools included English, Arabic, mathematics, history, Islamic studies, geography and Urdu along with mandatory vocational skills such as tailoring, weaving and carpentry.<sup>151</sup> Critical thinking and open discussions between teachers and students about politics, economics, and social issues were encouraged and given proper attention.<sup>152</sup> Speeches and discussions were arranged that produced orators who played active role in the freedom movement.<sup>153</sup> The number of students increased from 140 in April 1921 to 300 in April 1925.<sup>154</sup> Abdul Akbar Khan and Mian Ahmad Shah who were among the main organizers of the *Anjuman* and Azad schools told Rittenberg that the total number of schools under the *Anjuman* was from eighty three to one hundred and twenty. However, the government record listed the number of nationalist schools in 1924 as fifty three with 3,212 students.<sup>155</sup> Majority of the schools were

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<sup>149</sup> Aijaz Ahmad, "Frontier Gandhi: Reflections on Muslim Nationalism in India". *Social Scientist*, Vol No. 33, (Jan 2005), p. 31

<sup>150</sup> Tendulkar, 33

<sup>151</sup> Ahmad, *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, 7

<sup>152</sup> Akbar, *Da Bar-i- Sagheer*, 8 He was one of the founding members and written books about the movement and his tour and stay in Russia and Central Asia

<sup>153</sup> Ibid;

<sup>154</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 23

<sup>155</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement", 66



based in Charsadda and Peshawar valley due to the fact that most of the leadership of the *Anjuman* belonged to Charsadda Tehsil. The *Anjuman* did work in creating awareness for education and nurtured the feelings of ethnic nationalism which later played a significant role in bringing the Pakhtuns into the fold of Khudai Khidmatgar organization in 1929. However, with the exception of the Azad School Utmanzai which was affiliated with Jaamia- Milia- Islamia Delhi, the rest of the schools did not play a desirable role due to the lack of funds. Abdul Ghaffar Khan's arrest and three years rigorous imprisonment further complicated the situation and members of the *Anjuman* could not succeed in managing all the schools in an effective way. According to Aijaz Ahmad, the educational efforts and socio- political progress let the colonial authorities to send Abdul Ghaffar Khan to jail and made a nationalist out of him.<sup>156</sup>

## 2.7 The Pakhtun Journal

After his release from Jail in 1924, Abdul Ghaffar Khan undertook another tour of the whole province preaching for unity of the Pakhtuns. The people everywhere welcomed him as a hero and gave sympathetic hearing to his call for enlisting themselves in the *Anjuman*. The success of the *Anjuman* and the success of Azad Islamia schools compelled Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the *Anjuman* members to start a monthly socio- political journal in Pashto language which was named as '*Pakhtun*' whose first issue was published in May 1928.<sup>157</sup> It contained articles about socio- political problems, religious writings, Pashto dramas about patriotism and social evils, official and non official news.<sup>158</sup> For instance, the first issue of May 1928 contains articles about the situation in Afghanistan, *Yaghistan* or the tribal areas, pathetic plight of the Pakhtun women,

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<sup>156</sup> Ahmad, "Frontier Gandhi: Reflections on Muslim Nationalism in India", 31

<sup>157</sup> Ahmad. *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, 112

<sup>158</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 24



Islam and the Pakhtuns of NWFP, health issues and international politics.<sup>159</sup> Its circulation gradually rose from initial 500 to 3000 copies throughout the province. it was the time where most of the Pakhtuns were not well versed in their own mother tongue. There was no any Pashto journal. Mian Ahmad Shah (secretary of the *Anjuman* and advocate), Abdul Akbar Khan (president of the *Anjuman*, Pashto poet, writer and author of various books about the freedom struggle and had visited Russia and Central Asia for the cause), Syeda Bushra Begum, Mian Sayed Rasool (Pashto poet), Amir Nawaz Khan Jalya (Pashto poet), Abdul Khaliq Khaliq (Pashto poet, scholar and author of the book entitled, *Dha Azady Jang* or *The Battle for Freedom*), Alaf Jana Khattak (a female Pashto poet from Karak and many others were the first who contributed in starting the publication of the first ever Pashto monthly journal in the province under the leadership of Abdul Ghaffar Khan.<sup>160</sup> The leadership of the *Anjuman* tried its best to keep it socio- political and to avoid the chances of putting a ban on the Journal. However, sensing the political impact of the journal, the colonial authorities banned and reopened it several times.

## **2.8 Dethronement of the Afghan King Amanullah Khan, the Nationalist Response from the NWFP and the Formation of Zalmu Jirga (Youth League),**

Moreover, the events in Afghanistan were equally influencing the outlook and thinking of the Pakhtun leaders in the NWFP. The Afghan King, Amanullah Khan, who after completing a long tour of Europe (December 1927- July 1928) introduced modern social, political and educational reforms in the tribal society of Afghanistan. The King had returned from Europe in July 1928 with a reformist zeal for his motherland particularly Kamal Ataturk's Turkey has impressed

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<sup>159</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan, "Pukhtun" *Monthly Journal*, (Peshawar, 1928), 3

<sup>160</sup> Ahmad. *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, 113



him.<sup>161</sup> Kamal Atatürk had advised Amanullah Khan that keeping in view the primitive and tribal structure of the Afghan society; he should introduce modern reforms slowly and gradually. However, Amanullah was impatient in introducing the reforms in Afghanistan as he wanted to bring his people at par with other civilized nations of the world. He could not wait for years as he knew that he has less time. Giving practical shape to his socio- educational scheme of reforms like sending many male and female students to Europe for receiving modern education, banning the traditional veil, compulsory female education, wearing of coat and paints for the dignitaries and taking a tough stand against corruption of the bureaucrats in Afghanistan turned the tribal chiefs and conservative tribes on both sides of the Durand Line against the King. The Shinwari and Wazir tribes and the religious conservative *mullahs* revolted against Amir Amanullah Khan for his secular modern reforms. Eventually, the Afghan King abdicated the throne and left Kabul for Qandahar and Habibullah, popularly known as Bacha Saqao, who was ethnically a Tajik outlaw captured the throne for nine months from Inayatullah Khan, brother of King Amanullah Khan.<sup>162</sup> The progressive and secular dethroned Afghan King was an ideal leader of the Pakhtun nationalist leadership of the *Anjuman* in the NWFP who considered him anti imperialists and capable of bringing the Pakhtuns in Afghanistan out of the tribal social structure. Moreover, all the Pakhtuns considered Afghanistan as their spiritual home.<sup>163</sup>

Abdul Ghaffar Khan and all other frontier nationalists sensed a British instigated conspiracy against King Amanullah Khan since he was not liked by the British who had also waged the third Anglo Afghan war (1919) with the colonialists and secured independence and a free foreign policy for Afghanistan. The Afghan government also accused the British for instigating the tribes against the Amanullah Khan which the British flatly rejected and claiming of helping former but

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<sup>161</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 64

<sup>162</sup> Ibid; 51

<sup>163</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement", 82



not at the cost of alienating the Shinwaris, Mohmands and other Pakhtun tribes.<sup>164</sup> Certain people were used to instigate the conservative *tribes* and to create ill will *against* King Amanullah through various underhand tricks.<sup>165</sup> Speen *mullah* (white cleric) of British origin was stationed by the British for nine months in 1929 at Miranshah, headquarters of North Waziristan who exploited the religious sentiments of the tribesmen against Amanullah Khan.<sup>166</sup> Taking advantage of the Pakhtun hospitality, Speen *mullah* used to keep money and rifles for his hosts in nearby grave yards and telling them about his dreams. In reality, he was weaponizing and organizing a rebellion against the Afghan King.<sup>167</sup> Similarly, he distributed pictures of Queen Surraya sitting with Amanullah Khan and other Christian leaders during their trip to Europe and propagating that the Pakhtun King had converted to Christianity. One wonders why would the British legation ordered several hundred copies of the illustrated Weekly that contained the photographs of Queen Surraya in Europe who accompanied the King in his tour of Europe.<sup>168</sup> The British knew the extent of provocation of the tribes when they would have shown pictures of their queen sitting with the Europeans.

The *Anjuman* leaders in the NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) after extensive consultation about the worst situation in Afghanistan formed a *Hilal-i- Ahmer* (Red Crescent) committee and decided to send Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Mian Jaffar Shah to see Amanullah Khan who was then residing in Qandahar and to help him in every possible way. However, they were stopped in Baluchistan from proceeding to Afghanistan.<sup>169</sup> The *Anjuman* members toured the whole province and propagated in support of Amanullah Khan. A progressive and developed

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<sup>164</sup> India Office Library, "Proposed gift of arms to Afghanistan", IOR/L/PS/18/A209, 8th January 1929

<sup>165</sup> Ahmad, *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, 115

<sup>166</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah during a lecture on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2014 at the Department of History, Quaid-i- Azam University, Islamabad

<sup>167</sup> Ibid;

<sup>168</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 49

<sup>169</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 25



Afghanistan would certainly influence the people of the NWFP who in turn will demand greater autonomy and socio- political reforms from the British in the Frontier which was policy of the government to resist and avoid.<sup>170</sup> Anti government protests were held every where in the province by the *Anjuman* leaders against the British.

Meanwhile, Amanullah Khan had left Kabul for his ancestral land Qandahar and after reaching Bombay in India permanently settled in Italy.<sup>171</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan met the deposed Afghan King. However, he found King Amanullah Khan as a disheartened and disappointed man from his people in Afghanistan. Amanullah Khan asked Ghaffar Khan to help his cousin and military general Nadir Khan who after returning from France to Peshawar reached Kurram agency for regaining the throne of Kabul from the new Tajik King, Habibullah. Abdul Ghaffar Khan met Nadir Khan in Peshawar along with his elder brother Dr. Khan Sahib and they were assured that he wanted to regain the throne of Kabul for reinstating Amanullah Khan rather than proclaiming himself as the king and proceeded to the tribal area.<sup>172</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the *Anjuman* had collected a large sum of money from every district and tehsil during a long tour of the province for helping Nadir Khan which was later sent to him through Khadim Muhammad Akbar and Mian Fazal Akram after he had left for Kurram agency from Peshawar.<sup>173</sup> Moreover, Abdul Ghaffar Khan sent delegations to the tribes for helping Nadir Khan in his conquest of Kabul.<sup>174</sup>

The nationalist propaganda by Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the *Anjuman* throughout the province against the British and in favour of the deposed King Amanullah Khan and his general Nadir worked well. A delegation of Khilafatists from Bannu who were associated with the *Anjuman* and later changed into Khudai Khidmatgars went to the Mehsud and Wazir areas in South

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid;

<sup>171</sup> Khan, *Tareekhi-i- Bannu waziristan*, 82

<sup>172</sup> Ghaffar Khan. *Zama Zhwand*, 274

<sup>173</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang*, 102

<sup>174</sup> Ahmad, *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, 118



Waziristan to help Nadir Khan in recapturing the throne of Kabul.<sup>175</sup> The delegation was consisted of Haji Abdu Rehman, Molvi Gul Khuidad, Maulana of Lakki Marwat, Qazi Habib ur Rehman and Hakim Abdur Rahim under the leadership of Shaikh Ghulam Sarwar.<sup>176</sup> The same delegation also visited Dawar areas of Eidak, Hisso Khel, Hurmaz in Mirali Tehsil of North Waziristan and other areas near Miranshah where Malik Mirjani Darpa Khel along with others also contributed greatly in collecting money for the attack on Kabul.<sup>177</sup> A tribal *Lashkar* of Meshud, Wazir and Dawar tribes from Waziristan under the command of Musa Khan Mehsud, Shehzada Khan Mehsud and Shobi Khel Dawar Hamzoni who later became a military general under Faqir of Ipi against the British in the 1930s, marched towards Kabul and helped him in regaining power as the new Afghan King through a *loya Jirga* or Afghan parliament. The success of King Nadir Khan at Kabul was celebrated by the Pakhtun nationalists in the Frontier. The president of the *Anjuman*, Abdul Akbar Khan declared the capturing of Kabul as victory of the Pakhtuns and defeat of the British and their paid agents.<sup>178</sup> Similarly, Abdul Ghaffar Khan wrote in the *Pakhtun* journal of November 1929 that the conquest of Kabul was inspirational for the Pakhtuns of the Frontier and they should be united in breaking the shackles of slavery for the freedom of India.<sup>179</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Abdul Akbar Khan and Mian Ahmad Shah along with other Youth League members visited district Kohat, Bannu and D.I. Khan and arranged various political gatherings in where speeches were delivered against slavery and for the unity of the Pakhtuns.<sup>180</sup>

While the Pakhtuns of the settled areas propagated for the cause of Afghanistan politically and economically, the tribesmen in the tribal areas played active role in recapturing Kabul in

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<sup>175</sup> Khan, *Tareekhi-i- Bannu waziristan*”, 82

<sup>176</sup> Ibid;

<sup>177</sup> Ibid;

<sup>178</sup> Rittenberg, “The Independence Movement”, 83

<sup>179</sup> Ibid; 84

<sup>180</sup> Ghaffar Khan, *Zama Zhwand*, 277



October 1929. Several tribes from the tribal area supported the cause of Nadir Khan and tribes of Waziristan were responsible for his ultimate success.<sup>181</sup> The correspondence between Nadir Khan in Alizai area of Kurram agency and the delegation in Bannu was carried out by Nawaz Khan.<sup>182</sup> It should be noted however that the same tribes had played a role in overthrowing Amanullah Khan for his anti tribal modern reforms who enthroned his military general Nadir Khan at Kabul. They were unaware of the forces which were covertly exploiting them for their vested interests. At the same time, the Frontier Pakhtun nationalists were astonished when Nadir Khan proclaimed himself as the King instead of calling Amanullah Khan back to his throne.<sup>183</sup> However, the campaign and tours of the *Anjuman* leaders headed by Abdul Ghaffar Khan throughout the province politicized the Pakhtuns of the rural areas.<sup>184</sup> It further stimulated and encouraged the leaders of the *Anjuman* to revisit their priorities of social reforms in favour of the political struggle for freedom.<sup>185</sup>

Apart from the events in Afghanistan and the successful propaganda of the Frontier nationalists, Abdul Ghaffar Khan had already visited and observed various Islamic countries during his stay at Saudi Arabia for Hajj in 1926. He had realized that pan Islamism has been replaced by aggressive nationalism everywhere in the Muslim world as was the case with Ataturk in Turkey, Reza Shah in Iran, Ibn Saud in Arabia who were marching independently of each other. Similarly, Mian Akbar Shah who was active member of the *Anjuman* and author of the book, ‘*Azadi Ki Talash*’ or “In Search for Freedom” had gone to Russia and Central Asia in search of freedom proposed the formation of such an organization on the pattern of Turkey, Bukhara and

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<sup>181</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 51

<sup>182</sup> Khan, *Tareekhi-i- Bannu Waziristan*, 83

<sup>183</sup> Ghaffar Khan, “*Zama Zhwand*”, 277

<sup>184</sup> Rittenberg, “The Independence Movement”, 85

<sup>185</sup> Ibid;



Afghanistan. Resultantly, the *Zalmo Jirga* or youth league was formed on first September, 1929 with its headquarters at Utmanzai, Charsadda.<sup>186</sup>

Notables from all the districts were invited and participated in the proceedings of the *Jirga*. Some of the leaders who participated were Maqsud Jan from Bannu, Pir Gohar Ali Shah from Kohat, Abdu Rehman from D.I. Khan, Ali Asghar Khan from Hazara, Qazi Attaullah of Mardan, Mian Ahmad from Peshawar, Amir Mumtaz Khan from Bannu, Qaim Shah, Abdul Akbar Khan from Charsadda.<sup>187</sup> Abdul Akbar Khan was made its president, Mian Ahmad Shah as secretary and Mian Abdullah Shah as treasurer with thirteen others as members of the committee. Its initial members were mostly those who had received education from the educational institutions established by the *Anjuman*.<sup>188</sup> However, the membership of *Jirga* was open to all the youth irrespective of religion, caste and creed provided he is a literate and that the member should not participate in any sort of communalism in the province.<sup>189</sup> The secretary of the *Zalmo Jirga*, Mian Ahmad Shah while explaining at the aims and objectives of the new Youth League told the audience which was also published in the '*Pakhtun*' Journal that time was ripe for the Pakhtun youth to stand up for the liberation of land from the British rule by peaceful means.<sup>190</sup> He further explained that the Congress and the Khilafat committees were purely Indian parties and the Pakhtuns suffered a lot during the *Hijrat* movement.<sup>191</sup> He further said that "we have no organization of our own and the Indian parties did not give us a single rupee as a donation during the crisis in Afghanistan and that we have given them in thousands".<sup>192</sup> He criticized the Indian political parties for failing to support the struggle for reforms in the NWFP while demanding

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<sup>186</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang*, 114

<sup>187</sup> Ibid; 120 Also quoted in the *Pukhtun* journal of October 1929.

<sup>188</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 112

<sup>189</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 26

<sup>190</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang*, 114

<sup>191</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 26

<sup>192</sup> Ibid;



dominion status for themselves.<sup>193</sup> The Simon commission though boycotted by the Indian political parties and had recommended certain reforms for the Indian provinces. However, the NWFP and Baluchistan were excluded from the political reforms suggested for the rest of India.<sup>194</sup>

The executive committee of the *Anjuman* and other urban educated circles considered the British rule as the root cause of the prevailing poverty, illiteracy, social backwardness, and ignorance about local and international political problems since the province was kept aloof from the rest of India and deprived of all political reforms that were granted to all other provinces in India. The leaders of the *Anjuman* along with Abdul Ghaffar Khan used to visit the rural areas of all the districts and encouraged the youth to prepare themselves for the struggle ahead against the British.<sup>195</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan visited each and every village not only in Peshawar and Kohat but also in Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan. The formation of *Zalmo Jirga* or youth league in September, 1929 proved as a success by gaining sympathies of the youth for the struggle. The rural areas of Peshawar, Kohat and Bannu particularly the Bannuchi and Wazir tribes responded positively and hundreds of its youth sacrificed their lives during the 1930s and 40s when the movement was successfully waging a non-violent political struggle against the British rule in the region.

## **2.9 Birth of the Khudai Khidmatgar Organization and Its Manifesto**

Apart from the successful formation of the youth league for the literate youth of the province, the leadership of the *Anjuman* decided to establish a broad based organization for accommodating all segments and all ages including the illiterate sympathizers in November 1929 and named as the

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid;

<sup>194</sup> Khaliq, "Azadi key Perwaney" Urdu, (ed), Anwer Khan, (Peshawar: 1960), 28

<sup>195</sup> Khaliq, Dha Azady Jang, 115



Khudai Khidamatgar (Servants of God) organization. The leadership of the new organization was almost the same with Sarfaraz Khan as its president and Hijab Gul as the secretary.<sup>196</sup> It was actually the culmination of the earlier religious- political movements in the Pakhtun region from 1897 to 1929. However, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, out of his long experience against the colonial rule developed a different strategy for waging the war. In his interview to journalist Robert Bernays in 1931, He told that his Khudai Khidmatgar Movement was both social and political.<sup>197</sup> The previous Pakhtun movements were based on armed struggle while the Khudai Khidmatgar movement developed an alternative non violent strategy for getting rid of the British *raj*.<sup>198</sup> After observing his visits to the tribal areas several times before 1919 for waging a holy war, the political experience gained as a result of the failed *Hijrat* Movement, the success of socio-political struggle, the Pakhtuns nationalist propaganda in the province for unity and helping Nadir Khan in capturing the throne of Kabul on the one hand and the political effect of the constitutional struggle waged by the Indian political parties in India motivated Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Pakhtun nationalists in the province to fasten their struggle for freedom on the other. Abdul Ghaffar Khan thought of waging a constitutional struggle which was more threatening to the British than the armed resistance in the tribal areas despite a ban on political activities in the province. One can understand his commitment to the constitutional struggle when he disapproved of the *Jihad* started by Haji of Turangzai in 1915 and returned to the settled districts from the tribal territory for starting a socio- political and educational reformation of the Pakhtun society.<sup>199</sup> He was of the opinion that fighting the British by the disorganized tribes with

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<sup>196</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 27

<sup>197</sup> R. Kurtz Lester, "Peace Profile: Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Non- violent Jihad", *Peace Review*, George Mason University, (Jun 2011), 249 Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2011.571622>

<sup>198</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, xxxv

<sup>199</sup> Mukulika Banerjee, *The Pathan Unarmed: Opposition and Memory in the North West Frontier*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 48



few weapons and loyal *Mullahs* was destined to defeat and destruction of the Pakhtuns at the hands of the mighty British Empire.<sup>200</sup>

Since his return from the tribal areas in 1915, Abdul Ghaffar Khan had started a constitutional socio- political struggle against the British. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the leadership of the *Anjuman* were affected by the political events in Afghanistan and India. Apart from their anti British constitutional struggle in the province, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and leadership of the new organization could not sideline the political events in India. The freedom of the Pakhtuns was linked with the freedom of India. The Indian National Congress, being the largest political party had already started the freedom struggle throughout India. However, the North-West Frontier Province had no separate provincial branch of the Congress since its members could not succeed in enlisting minimum number of 2000 workers for having a separate Congress committee and was therefore amalgamated with the Punjab provincial Congress committee. Meanwhile, the annual session of the Indian National Congress was held at Lahore in December, 1929 under the president ship of Jawaharlal Nehru who declared the Congress objective of getting complete independence instead of a dominion status.<sup>201</sup> Achieving freedom from the British was also the ultimate goal of the Pakhtun nationalists in the North West Frontier of India.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan along with many members of the Khudai Khidmatar organization under the platform of the *Anjuman* participated in the political gathering that further strengthened their political commitment for independence.<sup>202</sup> He was impressed by the political activism and discipline of the male and female participants in the political gathering.<sup>203</sup> However, it would be injustice to attribute his entire constitutional struggle and commitment to non-violence to M.K.

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<sup>200</sup> Ghaffar. “*Zama Zhwand*,” 99

<sup>201</sup> Shah, *North-West Frontier*, 69

<sup>202</sup> Ahmad. *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, 118

<sup>203</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang*, 122



Gandhi's preaching as Abdul Ghaffar Khan met Gandhi in December 1929 for the first time while one of the conditions for the youth enlisted themselves in Youth League established in September 1929 was that the members of the League or *Jirga* would not be allowed to participate in any sort of communal disputes and that its membership was open to all literate youth irrespective of his religion and ethnicity. He was of the opinion that non- violence preaches love and brotherhood speaking of a new life for the Pakhtuns and a great revolution in art, culture, poetry and the whole social life.<sup>204</sup> His earliest preaching throughout the province for the adoption of non-violence and putting an end to inter-tribal feuds testifies his commitment to non-violence, unity and brotherhood for social and political reformation of the Pakhtun society.<sup>205</sup>

After their arrival to the province, he along with other Khidmatgars toured the province and started organizing the people on the pattern of the Congress. Political gatherings were arranged with the help of Abdul Ghaffar Khan's friends in every tehsil of the province and aims and objectives were explained to the people.<sup>206</sup> He appealed the people to join him in the peaceful struggle for liberating their land from the British. Anti-government speeches and appeal for unity were made throughout the province. Pakhtun *Jirgas* were made in every district and Tehsil.<sup>207</sup>

After completing the tours of every village in Peshawar, Kohat and Hazara along with Abdul Akbar Khan and many uniformed Khudai Khidmatgars, Abdul Ghaffar Khan planned for the visit of Bannu and D.I. Khan. He visited Bannu on the invitation of Maqsood Jan, a graduate of Aligarh Muslim University and other leading members of the *Anjuman* and the politically active

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<sup>204</sup> R. Kurtz Lester, "Peace Profile", .248

<sup>205</sup> Banerjee, *The Pathan Unarmed*, 51

<sup>206</sup> Ahmad, *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, 122- 174.

<sup>207</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang*, 131



Bannu Khilafat committee was merged into the Khudai Khidmatgar organization.<sup>208</sup> Most of the other Khilafat committees in the Punjab and other Indian provinces were already merged into the provincial Congress committees.<sup>209</sup> The volunteers were required to fill a form and take an oath of loyalty to their motherland.<sup>210</sup> Military ranks of general, colonel and captain were assigned to them in every district and Tehsil and bound to obey their seniors. All the members were to refrain from violence, blood feuds, narcotics and other social evils. They were to wear a uniform dress of white color. However, it was realized after the tour that the white color was prone to dust easily and keeping in view the poverty of the people, the members were told to dip their ordinary dresses in a chocolate or brown color and hence the movement came to be known as Red Shirt Movement by the British authorities.<sup>211</sup> Furthermore, some prominent members of the Movement like Mian Akbar Shah and Abdul Akbar Khan along with other young friends had visited Russia and Central Asia in search of getting revolutionary training for achieving freedom at the time when the Indian refugees were returning back to India from Afghanistan. Although, these revolutionaries were sent to various jails by the British on the arrival from Russia, they were dubbed as Bolsheviks when they joined the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement.

The initial membership of the workers was twelve to fifteen hundred.<sup>212</sup> However, the movement got warm support in the rural areas of the province which were earlier neglected by the Congress and other political organizations. Abdul Ghaffar Khan had already worked in the rural areas from the platform of the *Zalmo Jirga* and had thousands of sympathizers. The leadership of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement had used to explain to the people that they could not match the British in military struggle and would only end at the destruction of the Pakhtuns. Purification of

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<sup>208</sup> Gul Ayub. *Tarikh-i- Bannu Wazirisristan*, 83-84. See also Ahmad. *Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, 169

<sup>209</sup> Ibid; 83

<sup>210</sup> Khaliq, *Dha Azady Jang*, 130

<sup>211</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 28

<sup>212</sup> Ibid; 27



the Pakhtun society, putting an end to the tribal feuds and disunity, revival of the Pakhtun culture and Pashto literature, demanding political reforms and achieving freedom from the British were the main objectives of the movement. The Pakhtuns of the rural areas were receptive of the message and the movement received popularity. However, the movement spread like a wild fire after the British atrocities over the peaceful protesters in the NWFP during the civil disobedience movement started by the Indian National Congress in April 1930 which was joined by the Khudai Khidmatgar organization for the common goal of attaining freedom and which will be discussed in more details in the next chapter.



## Chapter Three

### **The Civil Disobedience Movement and its Impact upon the Tribal Areas (1930- 1934)**

Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the leadership of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement were busy in popularizing the Movement in the rural population of the North West Frontier. It was ensured by Abdul Ghaffar Khan that no single village was left unvisited and untouched by them. On the other hand, the Congress provincial members were busy in their political activities in the Peshawar Valley instead of working on the majority rural population. Meanwhile, the Indian National Congress started a mass civil disobedience movement and non-cooperation in India in March 1930 for *Swaraj* or complete independence. The provincial members of the Congress in the NWFP also followed the decision of the Congress leadership by breaking the salt law and picketing liquor shops in April 1930. Owing to the popularity of the Afghan *Jirga* and Khudai Khidmatgars in the rural areas, the Congress members requested Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his associates for help to which they agreed unconditionally.<sup>1</sup> The civil disobedience initiated by the Congress offered the Khudai Khidmatgars as a mean of achieving freedom from the British which was the main objective of the Pakhtuns.<sup>2</sup> Hence, the movement was carried on by joint struggle of the Congress urban elite, the Pakhtun nationalists and religious leaders of the rural

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<sup>1</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, "The 1930 Civil Disobedience Movement in the Peshawar Valley from the Pashtoon Perspective", *Studies in History*, 29, 1 (Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2013), 98

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Alan Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement in India's North- West Frontier, 1901- 1947", Unpublished PhD thesis submitted to the Department of Political Science, (University of Columbia, 1977), 2



areas in the province. As soon as the authorities tried to eliminate one, the next would assume control of the movement.<sup>3</sup>

In order to minimize public unrest in the province, the government decided to arrest the local Congress leaders before picketing of liquor shops. Nine members of the Congress were arrested from their office in Peshawar on the night between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> April and sent to Bala Hissar Fort.<sup>4</sup> Ghulam Rabani and Allah Bakhsh Sethi, members of the newly formed War Council were arrested in the morning of 23<sup>rd</sup> April and sent to Kabuli police station in the center of Peshawar. The news of their arrests spread in the city and people started gathering in front of the Congress office in large numbers. The charged but unarmed protesters moved towards the police station where the Congress leaders were kept under police custody. However, the presence and chanting anti- government slogans were wrongly taken as an attack on the station.<sup>5</sup> The army was called in and armored cars started firing on peaceful protesters. While the Congress report under Patel put the figure between two hundred and three hundred, the official inquiry report put the figure at thirty dead and thirty three injured. However, the actual figure of dead was about two hundred and thirty persons.<sup>6</sup>

The Khudai Khidmatgars or Afghan *Jirga* was initially treated differently and no arrests were made by the authorities. Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Sarfaraz Khan, Mian Ahmad Shah and Shah Nawaz Khan were sent back to Charsadda and put into local prison while coming to Peshawar on the set date for picketing liquor shops. They were also tried in a court and sentenced to three years imprisonment and sent to Gujrat jail. The arrests of the popular leaders and killing of unarmed protesters enraged not only the people of the settled districts but also the frontier tribes.

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<sup>3</sup> Stephen Alan Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, (North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2016), 90

<sup>4</sup> Shah, "The 1930 Civil Disobedience Movement in the Peshawar Valley", 99

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 100

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 102



Hundreds of Pakhtun nationalists from Wazir and Bannuchi tribes of Bannu were busy in popularizing the civil disobedience in Kohat, Bannu and D.I. Khan. The authorities used every kind of force starting from wholesale arrests, mid night house searches, insulting the women and carrying luggage from the houses.<sup>7</sup> The Qissa Khwani massacre was followed by mass killings of protesters in district Kohat and also more than seventy protesters were massacred at Wazir area of Bannu.<sup>8</sup> The movement was now carried on by joint struggle of the Khudai Khidmatgars, the Congress workers and members of the Khilafat movement against the British authorities in the southern districts which shared borders with the semi- autonomous tribal agencies.

The Afridis of Khyber Agency, Wazirs and Mehsuds of Waziristan and the tribes of Mohmand area did not remain silent spectators to the atrocities of the British on these non violent protesters in the settled districts. They started attacking the British installations in their respective areas or along the administrative border with the settled districts. The *mujahidin* movement had been trying for a long time against the *raj* but without much success and by Abdul Ghaffar Khan's time the movement had collapsed.<sup>9</sup> The civil disobedience movement and the British reaction to it renewed the independence spirit of the tribes. Despite, the peaceful and constitutional struggle and the desire of the Khudai Khidmatgar leadership to spread the movement in the tribes, the British tried hard to stop its message across the administrative border and succeeded in keeping the independent tribes isolated from the movement in the strict sense of the word. The Afghan government under King Nadir Khan who was politically supported by the Khudai Khidmatgars and armed *Lashkars* of the frontier tribes also played a role in minimizing the influence of the movement by threatening the Afghan allowance holders to be friendly with the British.

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<sup>7</sup> Abdul Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns on the Pathan Frontier*, (Bombay: Hind Kitabs Publishers, 1945), 30

<sup>8</sup> Shah, "The 1930 Civil Disobedience Movement in the Peshawar Valley from the Pashtoon Perspective", 111

<sup>9</sup> R. Kurtz Lester, "Peace Profile: Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Non- violent Jihad", *Peace Review*, George Mason University, (Jun 2011), 247 Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2011.571622>



However, the major socio- political events in the settled areas of the province, armed reaction of the frontier tribes and British divisive policy helped to show the real picture of the aggravated situation in the province and the deplorable conditions of the tribes.<sup>10</sup> The killings of peaceful protesters at Peshawar, Kohat and Bannu directly influenced the actions and decisions of the semi Independent tribes. The tribes however, reacted militarily to the crises in the settled districts. The nationalist propaganda ran high throughout the tribal areas.<sup>11</sup>

The joint struggle of the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars against the British during the civil disobedience and their shared political approach towards freedom and political compulsion necessitated the affiliation of the later with former in August 1931. The history of the Movement shows that the Pakhtuns were ready to join any political party which could help them in achieving their regional objectives and allowing autonomy in the Indian affairs.<sup>12</sup> The Indian National Congress extended the needed help.<sup>13</sup> The close relationship between the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgar organization helped the former in claiming the support of the Muslim majority province of the NWFP and representative of all the Indians. At the same time, the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement got the recognition of the Indian population, the press and indeed the British repressive policies in the frontier and its tribes were brought before the world which was kept as isolated so far. In fact, the Khudai Khidmatgar organization which had been spreading socio- political and educational awareness in the shape of *Zalmo Jirga* and *Anjuman-i-Islahul Afaghna* (society for the reformation of Afghans) emerged as a political force during the 1930s. Most of the members of Bannu Khilafat committee and the Congress workers joined the Khudai Khidmatgar organization in 1930 that ultimately became provincial branch of the

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<sup>10</sup> Mohammad Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, (Bombay: Hind Kitabs Ltd, 1947), 57

<sup>11</sup> Christian Tripodi, "Negotiating with the Enemy: Politicals and Tribes 1901-47" *The journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 39, No. 4, (November 2011), 596

<sup>12</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement in India", 3

<sup>13</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 29



Congress.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, Abdul Ghaffar Khan became a prominent member of the Central Congress committee.

The British government had called on a Round Table Conference at London of the all the Indian political parties. The Congress represented by M. K. Gandhi participated in the second round table conference but the deliberations with the All India Muslim League and other political parties of India on the future of India resulted in failure. After the deliberations in the Round Table Conferences and to pacify the leaders and people of the Frontier, the government announced constitutional reforms which were the long standing demand of all the political leaders of the province. However, the civil disobedience was ultimately called off by Gandhi in April 1934 due to fear of erupting violent clashes between the Indians and the British rulers and decided to take part in the coming general elections in India.

### **3.1 The Civil Disobedience Movement in the NWFP**

The provincial Congress members in the NWFP following the decision of the central Congress leadership in March 1930, started the civil disobedience movement by breaking the salt law.<sup>15</sup> On 15<sup>th</sup> April, they brought clay from Pabbi and manufactured salt which was sold on nominal prices. The authorities did not arrest anyone. The Congress members decided for picketing liquor shops on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1930 in order to invite arrests and gain public sympathy. A meeting of more than twelve hundred persons of Khudai Khidmatgars, *Zalmo Jirga* (Youth League), Congress and Khilafat committees was arranged at the annual session of Azad School Utmanzai in Charsadda on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> April. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the leadership of the Khudai Khidmatgars were requested to join the civil disobedience of the Congress for making it a

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<sup>14</sup> Khan, Gul Ayub, *Tareekhi-i- Bannu waziristan*, (Peshawar: Azeem Publishing Agency, 1969), 83

<sup>15</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Azadi ki Talash* (Trans) Mian Akbar Shah, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1989), 21



success to which they agreed unconditionally.<sup>16</sup> The prominent Congress members in the province such as Sayed Lal Badshah, Ali Gul Khan, Molvi Abdur Rahim, Rahim Bakhsh, Khan Mir Hilali and others were arrested a day before on the night of 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Most of them had membership of both the Congress and the Khilafat committees. The Congress had a very low membership in the frontier province and concentrated in the main cities. Its total membership in the NWFP in July 1930 was 567.<sup>17</sup> The frontier branch of the Congress has been existed since 1922. However, owing to the lack of required members for a separate committee in the province, the members had been working under the Punjab Province Congress Committee (PPCC). However, ignoring the decision of the central Congress committee, its provincial members formed the Frontier Province Congress Committee (FPCC) on 17<sup>th</sup> November with Lal Badshah as its president, Abdur Rahim of D.I. Khan and Abdul Ghaffar Khan as vice presidents and pleader and Habibullah Khan of Bannu as secretary.

The active participation of *Zalmo Jirga*, Khudai Khidmatgars and the Khilafat members spread the civil disobedience in the rural areas of the province. The leaders of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Abdul Akbar Khan, Mian Ahmad, Serfaraz Khan, Shah Nawaz Khan and others while going to Peshawar were initially debarred from entering the city and were brought back to Charsadda. However, to avoid unrest in the rural areas, the government arrested the leadership of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization on 24<sup>th</sup> April and sent them to Gujrat jail for three years under frontier crimes regulation (FCR). The *Pukhtun* journal was declared illegal and its publication was stopped.<sup>18</sup> This further led to public unrest and thousands of people started protests in Charsadda. Dr. Khan Sahib, the elder brother of Abdul Ghaffar Khan held a meeting at Utmanzai and after convincing the participants to remain non-violent collected

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<sup>16</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, 32

<sup>17</sup> Ibid; 31

<sup>18</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 154



the weapons from the people.<sup>19</sup> It should be noted however, that the members of both the Congress and Khudai Khidmatgar organizations during its initial stages were not completely non violent in the strict sense of the word. Some of Abdul Ghaffar Khan's associates were against his non violent philosophy. During a visit to the NWFP in August 1931, Devdas Gandhi while going to FR Bannu along with the leaders of *Zalmo Jirga* and Khudai Khidmatgar organization such as Abdul Akbar Khan (President), Mian Ahmad Shah (Secretary) and other members attended political gatherings in Kohat, Karak and Bannu. He feared that in the absence of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Abdul Akbar Khan and Mian Ahmad Shah, the Khudai Khidmatgars could go to violence.<sup>20</sup> Mian Ahmad Shah, who later developed differences with Abdul Ghaffar Khan on the question of affiliating Khudai Khidmatgar organization with the Congress bluntly, told Devdas Gandhi that we can object the Congress political party on the same pattern that in the absence of Gandhi, Abul Kalam Azad and Jawaharlal, its members could go to violence.<sup>21</sup> The Congress being the biggest political party of India and the Khudai Khidmatgar in the North-West Frontier were popular organizations and finding people who could go to violence was not out of question. However, one can not deny that as a whole the Congress and Khudai Khidmatgars remained non violent throughout the civil disobedience movement.

After the arrest of all the prominent Congress members, hundreds of protesters gathered in Peshawar on 23<sup>rd</sup> April for demanding release of their leaders. The police initially feared the large number of protesters who were allegedly trying to forcefully enter the police station called in the army for help. Sadullah Khan, a city magistrate was present inside the police station where

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<sup>19</sup> D.G Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan: Faith is a Battle*, (New Delhi: Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1967), 66

<sup>20</sup> Abdul Akbar Khan Khan, *Da Bar-i- Sagheer Pak Wo Hind Pa Azady key Da Pukhtano Barkha*, (Peshawar: University Publishers, 2009), 157 Abdul Akbar Khan was the president of the *Zalmo Jirga* and have authored several books in Pashto about the Pakhtun struggle for freedom. He was one of those associates of Ghaffar Khan who had left for Russia during the Hijrat Movement. After returning to the province, he joined Ghaffar Khan in his educational and socio- political projects. He was the president of the *Zalmo Jirga* and leading member of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.



the prisoners were kept and he telephoned the Deputy Commissioner, Aubery Metcalf that the protesters were essentially non-violent and after throwing some rocks were dispersing on the insistence of their leaders at the station.<sup>22</sup> However, the Deputy Commissioner thought that his Indian subordinate was underestimating the crowd and ordered four armored cars towards the site of the protest outside the police station near Kabuli gate. The cars came with great speed running over 12 to 14 protesters while the British account places the casualties at 5 to 6.<sup>23</sup> The British commander ordered the soldiers for opening fire killing more than two hundred people on the spot and hundreds other got wounded. On 31<sup>st</sup> May another twelve persons were killed at Peshawar.<sup>24</sup> This was followed by protests, killings and arrest of thousands of political workers throughout the province. The civil disobedience had spread to district Kohat, Bannu and D.I. Khan in the south of the province. The Deputy Commissioner of district Kohat wrote to the Chief Commissioner of the province on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1930 and was forwarded to the Foreign Secretary to the government of India on 4<sup>th</sup> September that the anti government movement has spread to the Kohat district and the surrounding rural population. However, he controlled the situation through the Nawab of Teri who being hereditary chief of the Khattaks of Kohat undertook policing duty along with some 120 Khattaks from Tehsil Karak and prevented the situation under control.<sup>25</sup> However, Bannu was the second city after Peshawar where the civil disobedience got widespread popularity.

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<sup>22</sup> Brandon Marsh, *Ramparts of Empire: British Imperialism and India's Afghan Frontier 1918- 1948*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 97

<sup>23</sup> Ibid; 103

<sup>24</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 32

<sup>25</sup> India office Library, "Deputy Commissioner to Chief Commissioner North-West Frontier", Memorandum No. 635-S, 28<sup>th</sup> August 1930, sent to the Foreign Secretary to the government of India, Foreign and Political Department, 4<sup>th</sup> September 1930, IOR./L/PS/12/3122



### 3.2 Hathi Khel incident in Bannu

By June, the movement was seemingly defeated in district Bannu after arrests of the local Congress leaders.<sup>26</sup> However, the *mullahs* and tribal elders took over the agitation that led to more killings in Bannu. More than seventy Khudai Khidmatgars were killed on the spot at Spin Tangi bridge in Domail area of Bannu on 24 August 1930.<sup>27</sup> According to Pashto and Urdu sources section 144 was enforced in Bannu and a political assembly of Wazir tribes in FR Bannu, the Khattaks, the Marwat and Bannuchis was announced on 24<sup>th</sup> August under the leadership of Qazi Fazal Qadir Banuchi under the patronage of local Wazir tribal elders. Hundreds of people reached the Hathi Khel Wazir area by ignoring section 144 and crack down on all political workers. They gathered in groups and reached Spin Tangi Bridge on the announced date and time. Meanwhile, a British force consisting of both the British and Indian soldiers reached the place for stopping the leaders and Wazir elders from holding the political gathering. The British commander went straight towards Fazal Qadir and wanted to stop him from delivering the speech and ordered them to disperse. However, he continued the speech. Violating the order of the British commander and not stopping the speech, the officer shot dead Qazi Fazal Qadir in the head.<sup>28</sup> While seeing their leader as lying dead without any crime, a Khattak named Gunj lost his patience and killed the commander with his sword.<sup>29</sup> Gul Rehman Wazir attacked the sepoy of the British officer with a rod and another Mir Azam snatched a rifle

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<sup>26</sup> Stephen Alan Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, (North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2016), 91

<sup>27</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 33

<sup>28</sup> Muhib Wazir, *Thal Waziro key Khudai Khidmatgar Tehrik*, (Pashto), (Peshawar: University Book Agency, 2014), 26

<sup>29</sup> Ibid; The author has personally visited the grave of the Qazi Fazal Qadir where the jail has been changed into a park and named after him. Moreover, the author has also visited the place at Hathi Khel where the actual incident had happened and discussions were held with the families of those who were killed that day and whose scattered graves are present to the present day.



from a nearby soldier. Henceforth, the heavily armed British forces started firing the people indiscriminately killing more than seventy on the spot and left many wounded.<sup>30</sup>

The British detailed report about the incident by the Deputy Commissioner of Bannu to the Chief Commissioner of the province dated 30<sup>th</sup> August is not very different from the local sources and shows highhandedness of the authorities. While the indigenous sources tell the number of the tribesmen as more than seventy on the spot, the British report estimates it to be about forty persons. The Deputy Commissioner narrates the event and says that,

“*Mullah* Fazal Qadir along with *Mullah* Abdul Jalil was the Congress leader from Bannuchi tribe. He had extended the Congress activities to the Jani Khel and Baka Khel Wazir *elaqas* (areas) of FR Bannu and acquired a considerable number of followers for his anti government speeches. A *Jirga* of *maliks* from both the tribes was called into Bannu on 29<sup>th</sup> July to see the resident in Waziristan. An ultimatum was given, one of the terms of which was to arrest or expel the *Mullahs* from their areas which was complied with. *Mullah* Abdul Jalil left Jani Khel and Baka Khel areas with small followings and subsequently reappeared in Shawal area of North Waziristan where he has been seen in collecting a *Lashkar* of considerable size. *Mullah* Fazal Qadir again came to Bannu and acted as a principal speaker at the Congress meetings against the British government. Vigorous action was at once taken against the Bannuchi villages who were associated with the Congress. A large number of police was turned out in organized pursuit parties to endeavor to affect Fazal Qadir’s arrest. The *Mullah* betook himself to the Hathi Khel area between Khattak and Marwat areas...On 22<sup>nd</sup> August, at a Friday prayer in Qasaban mosque of Bannu, a meeting was announced to be held at Hathi Khel on 24<sup>th</sup> August. A drastic action was needed for avoiding the spread of Congress activities in the area. It was decided to demolish the houses and confiscate the properties of the five leading conveners of the meeting under section 21 of the Frontier Crimes Regulation. Three of them were arrested while the two influential *maliks*, Ayub Khan and Mirdad were to be arrested before holding the meeting... On 24<sup>th</sup> of August, I went along with three hundred men of 6<sup>th</sup> Royal battalion and a hundred men of the Frontier Constabulary and police in order to prevent the meeting from being holding. The destruction of one house was hardly completed when Ayub Khan sent a messenger that we are ready to

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid; 27



surrender and go along with the followers to Bannu *Jail* after allowing to hold the meeting and that the proceedings of the gathering will be as short as possible. A second condition was that the confiscated properties will be restored to the owners. While we were stationed and destroying the houses of the other conveners, I ordered captain Ashcroft along with a platoon to prevent the *Lashkar* from being entering the avenue of the meeting with instructions not to fire first... When the engagement was over, I learnt that Captain Ashcroft moved too near to the *Lashkar* ordering his platoon to make square. He halted and was shot dead by the *Lashkar*. I do not know what prompted him to go too near to them. The estimated casualties of the *Lashkar* are forty including Fazal Qadir who succumbed to injuries while being brought to Bannu and approximately the same number wounded. Our casualties sustained to nine killed including Captain Ashcroft and nine others wounded. Three of our men were killed with daggers and knives. One rifle and two bayonets are lost, orders for the return of which have been given to the Hathi Khel tribe.”<sup>31</sup>

The killing of British soldiers with daggers and snatching of a rifle matches with the indigenous sources and that the people were not armed as the term used in the report as *Lashkar* is mostly used in Pashto for a war party with weapons. Moreover, the report and the eye witness statements of the government employees shows that the armed soldiers were killed in retaliation to the killing of their unarmed leader. It should be noted that the dead body of Qazi Fazal Qadir was not handed over to his heirs and buried inside Bannu district jail as punishment. Recently, the Mutahidda Majlis-i- Amal (MMA) government during Musharraf’s rule, the chief minister of the province, Akram Khan Durrani declared the jail as Fazal Qadir Shaheed Park and constructed a new Bannu district jail outside the city.<sup>32</sup>

Apart from these killings, thousands of political workers along with the entire leadership were put behind bars throughout India. In the Frontier province, only Haripur jail was reported to have political prisoners ranging from seven to twelve thousands. The treatment meted out to the

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<sup>31</sup> India Office, “C.H. Gidney, Deputy Commissioner Bannu to Chief Commissioner North-West Frontier Province”, Memo, No, 148, 30<sup>th</sup> August 1930, IOR/L/PS/12/3123

<sup>32</sup> The author personally lives in Bannu and often visits the Park and grave of Fazal Qadir Shaheed inside it. Similarly, the new central jail of Bannu is at about one kilometer walking distance from the author’s home.



prisoners was harsher in violation of all kinds of human rights. Different posters distributed in Peshawar city in Urdu and Persian portrays a shameful picture of the situation. One of the posters while presenting the plight of the political prisoners in Peshawar jail states that,

“The prisoners are treated inhumanly by the so called civilized government. About Twenty persons are fell down on the ground daily with their hands and feet tied and thumb impressions are taken by force for their release. Those self-respecting persons who refuse to go out of their prison cells for sign are given the dirtiest possible diet. Three of the prisoners have so far been yoked and owing to the hardships, they have started spitting blood. Similarly, Mr. Ghulam Rabbani and *Mullah Khanmir* in Ambala jail, Sardar Gul and Ilahi Bakhsh in the Bannu jail are tormented. The political prisoners of Bannu jail are also spitting blood. Would a patriotic assembly member put a question about the dire tyranny in practice in our unfortunate province and thus show sympathy with them?”<sup>33</sup>

### **3.3 Reaction of the Frontier Tribes towards the British**

The civil disobedience spread across the administrative border of the province.<sup>34</sup> The semi independent tribes could not remain silent spectators to the happenings in these areas and started attacks on the British installations. The Frontier Governor George Cunningham in his confidential note on the frontier policy in October 1938 writes that the Afridi attack of Peshawar was in support of the Red Shirts trouble.<sup>35</sup> A political gathering was arranged by Mian Hameed Gul at Ziarat KaKa Nowshera which was also attended by the Afridis of tribal territory.<sup>36</sup> The Khudai Khidmatgars enlisted the support of the Afridis for the armed struggle against the British.<sup>37</sup> It was decided that the Afridis and Mohmands will jointly attack Peshawar. However, the information reached the British authorities through the British informants which unlashd a

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<sup>33</sup> Peshawar Archives, Special Branch Report, Bundle No. 44, Serial No. 701-15, File No. 712,

<sup>34</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 92

<sup>35</sup> India Office Library, “Note on the North- West Frontier Policy”, Mss Eur D670/13, October 1938

<sup>36</sup> Shah, Sayed Wiqar Ali, *Azadi ki Talash* (Trans) Mian Akbar Shah, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1989), 22

<sup>37</sup> S. Iftikhar Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes along the Pak-Afghan Border*, (Peshawar: Area Study Centre, 2000), 36



new wave of government's suppression over the Congress and Khudai Khidmatgar workers.<sup>38</sup>

The leadership of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization always denied that they were calling the frontier tribes for an armed struggle. The common Khudai Khidmatgars however, seems to have invited and giving information of the political situation to the tribesmen. Moreover, most of the Khilafatists who had joined recently were in contacts with the tribes and trying to organize them against the British.

It is worth mentioning that no Khudai Khidmatgar was allowed by the British to enter the tribal areas. The Afirids and Mohmands being living on the border with Peshawar valley were moved by the killings at Peshawar and atrocities of the British over the people throughout the province with the exception of district Hazara where the situation was comparatively normal. Houses of the political workers were searched at mid nights and rendered naked in public. They were beaten severely with iron rods. Despite every kind of barbarity, the Khudai Khidmatgars remained peaceful at large and did not bow down before the authorities. Interestingly, the Khudai Khidmatgar enlisted workers were in hundreds in 1929 but by September, 1930 after the British repression over the people, the number of volunteers raised to over 80, 000.<sup>39</sup> While the people in the districts were joining the protests of the Congress and Khudai Khidmatgar movement, the frontier tribes reacted militarily against the injustices of the British over the non violent freedom fighters. However, owing to the large population of the people in the settled districts and the frontier tribes, there were thousands others in the province who were loyalists of the British Indian government either for getting personal favours and economic gains or unable to challenge the government.

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<sup>38</sup> Shah, *Azadi ki Talash*, 23

<sup>39</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 66



### 3.4 Mohmand Attacks

On 11<sup>th</sup> May 1930, it was reported that a poster purporting to be a message from Haji Sahb of Turangzai was placarded in Masjid Qasim Ali Khan Peshawar asking the people not to be worried and anxious as they (Mohmand Tribe) were collecting *Lashkar* (war party) and would attack the British Indian territory from Shabqadar side.<sup>40</sup> Interestingly, the British loyalist Khans informed the Mohmand tribe under Haji Sahb of Turangzai that in case of passing the tribal *lashkar* through Shabqader, the villagers will fight on the side of the British.<sup>41</sup> Disappointed and unable to overcome the situation, the Haji Sahib of Turangzai postponed the attack for the time being. However, he attacked British installations from time to time till his death in 1937 with the help of the Mohmand anti British forces. The Governor of the Frontier Governor George Cunningham writes in 1938 that the sporadic attacks of the Mohmand tribe increased during the last five years.<sup>42</sup>

The provincial authorities were blaming the Khudai Khidmatgars for calling the independent tribes to avenge the blood of the people killed in the settled areas of the province. In a reply to the telegram from central home department, Delhi on 9 April 1934 for the release of local political prisoners as a result of the Gandhi- Irwin pact, the provincial government stated that the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement was different from the Congress and was unconstitutional.<sup>43</sup> The report further says that Abdul Ghaffar Khan from day one was associated with King's enemies such as Haji of Turangzai who organized Mohmand incursions in the border region of Peshawar for his release and that the tribal *Lashkar* received active support from the red shirts.<sup>44</sup> The significant part of the report to the central Indian government is that it acknowledged the spread

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<sup>40</sup> Peshawar archives, "Special Branch Report", File No. 712, Bundle No. 44, Serial No. 701-15

<sup>41</sup> Shah, *Azadi ki Talash*, 23

<sup>42</sup> India Office Library, "Note on the North- West Frontier Policy", Mss Eur D670/13, October 1938

<sup>43</sup> Peshawar Archives, "CID Report", File No. 1858, Bundle No. 39, Serial No. 632

<sup>44</sup> Ibid;



of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement across the border to Malakand, Bajaur and Mohmand agencies and that the sympathies of the Red Shirts with pro- Amanullah Khan forces in Afghanistan was an established fact. Giving license to the Red Shirt Movement in the NWFP would be tantamount to encouraging potentialities of trouble in the tribal and Afghan spheres.<sup>45</sup> However, the Khudai Khidmatgars refuted government allegations that they were inviting the tribes for attacking British soldiers and installations.<sup>46</sup>

### 3.5 Waziristan

The Khudai Khidmatgar Movement had not spread among the general population of Waziristan due to the fact that the movement was in its initial stage. Moreover, the Khudai Khidmatgar volunteers were never allowed to propagate their ideology among the common people. Before the start of the civil disobedience in 1930, Abdul Ghaffar Khan had sent letters to the Mehsuds and Wazirs to be united in case of overthrowing the British rule from the region.<sup>47</sup> After the British repression in the districts, the Congress workers and the Khudai Khidmatgars started entering the Frontier tribes. For instance, At Idak Dawar area of Mirali, three members namely Beli Ram, Said Ali Shah and Mir Sahib Shah were arrested on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1930 and sent to jail by the political agent of North Waziristan for their pro Congress activities in the area.<sup>48</sup> Despite no proper propaganda and sufficient monetary help by the Congress or the Khudai Khidmatgars, the Mehsud and Wazir tribes started attacking the British as a reaction to their repression on the political workers in the settled districts of Peshawar and Bannu. A *Lashkar* of more than four thousand Madda Khel and Khadar Khel tribes in Datta Khel Tehsil of North Waziristan attacked

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid;

<sup>46</sup> Peshawar archives, "Special Branch Report", File No. 712, Bundle No. 44, Serial No. 701-15

<sup>47</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity*, 93

<sup>48</sup> India Office Record, "Political Agent to Resident in Waziristan", Memorandum No. 9239/V.O, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1930, IOR./L/PS/12/3122



a *Malatia* (levies) check post on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1930.<sup>49</sup> The same day, a *Lashkar* of 1200 Dawar tribe attacked another fort in Tehsil Boya.<sup>50</sup> On receiving the news at Miranshah headquarter, a column was sent along with artillery that dispersed the *Lashkar* and the British authorities on 13<sup>th</sup> May sent a notice to the Madda Khel tribe for voluntary surrender of twenty *maliks* and elders to the government. On ignoring the notice, the village was bombarded by aero planes killing seven men and destroying thirty houses. After sending another column from Razmak Brigade, the tribe was forced to surrender twenty men to the government.<sup>51</sup> A secret letter from the British resident officer wrote to the political department that the attacks in Datta Khel tehsil were undoubtedly engineered by the Red Shirts in district Bannu who were inspired by the Congress doctrine and pro Amanullah views of Abdul Ghaffar Khan.<sup>52</sup> While Qazi Fazal Qadir Bannuchi opted for peaceful protests and was ultimately killed along with seventy other peaceful protesters at Spin Tangi bridge in August 1930, Molvi Abdul Jalil Bannuchi had escaped to North Waziristan and supported by the Madda Khel and Khadar Khel Wazir tribes started attacking the British check posts in Datta Khel tehsil. However, the concerned tribes were suppressed with the British military force by bombing their houses and compelled to come to terms with the government. Another *Lashkar* was gathered in Shawal valley but was threatened by air planes and dispersed by the loyal *malik* Atta Muhammad Khan, Tori Khel. According to the written statements of loyal *maliks*, *Mullah* Ghaina Din and his son from Bannu and Gul Din from Mehsud area who were working for the Congress were responsible for the attacks on the British posts.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> J. W. Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, (Karachi: Indus Publications, 1963), 166 See also Tarin, *Faqir Ipi*, (Lahore: Taj Company Limited, 1984), 56

<sup>50</sup> Ibid;

<sup>51</sup> Abdul Hameed Tarin, *Faqir Ipi*, (Lahore: Taj Company Limited, 1984), 56

<sup>52</sup> India Office Record, Report from Resident in Waziristan to the Political Department, "Congress Responsibility of Disturbances in Waziristan", 16<sup>th</sup> July 1931. IOR./L/PS/12/3122

<sup>53</sup> India Office Record, "Written statement by Malik Atta Muhammad Khan to the Political Agent North Waziristan", 14<sup>th</sup> March, 1931, IOR./L/PS/12/3122



After the armed resistance from the tribes of Waziristan in support of the civil disobedience movement, some people of Madda Khel tribe started unifying the people in 1931 and undertaking military drill on the pattern of Khudai Khidmatgars of the settled districts. However, the movement was never left for gaining strength and suppressed by the British authorities. For instance, the confidential letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> August 1931, from Lieutenant Colonel and Resident in North Waziristan to the Chief Commissioner, North-West Frontier, Nathiagali, clearly identifies the arrival of the Red Shirt Movement in far flung Madda Khel area Waziristan and writes that:

“*Mullah* Walim is a man of no previous importance. He first came into prominence in July when he started preaching against the Madda Khel *maliks*. In the second week of July, he was visited by *mullah* Abdul Halim of Bannu district who suggested him to start a Red Shirt movement in the Upper Tochi (North Waziristan). Halim is said to have promised to supply the necessary uniforms. Shortly afterwards it was reported that *Mullah* Walim had taken to holding parade of his more than a dozen followers each morning and greeted him with a solute. During the parade, the *Mullah* wore red shirt but his followers appeared to be in normal uniforms. It was subsequently reported that his influence in area was increasing. His daily activities consist of meeting with his followers at which shots are fired and shouts of “*Inqilaab Zindabad*” (long live revolution) are raised and a visit to a neighboring *Ziyarat* (shrine) where discussions are held. The political agent called upon the leading *maliks* to deal with the situation as his followers are reported to have reached over two hundred. However, they appear to have made halfhearted attempt and showed their inability to turn the *mullah* out of the country. It is probably due to the tribal differences between the two leading *maliks* Zangi and others on the one hand and *Malik* Arsala Khan and his adherents on the other.

I interviewed the leading Madda Khel *Maliks* at Miranshah and reminded them that they receive allowances conditionally and upon good tribal behavior. They requested to institute a blockade of Khazar Khel and Nazar Khel sub sections as they were responsible for the activities of *mullah* Walim and have failed to take any affective action against him. *Mullah* Walim is reported to have informed the *maliks* that he contemplates no hostile action against the government. It is evident from this and other features that his campaign is a direct off-shoot of the Red Shirt Congress movement. His headquarters are at Sanzala in the Kazhar valley at present. It is useless to attempt to forecast the ultimate result of his activities. There is no



immediate cause for anxiety and not appropriate for the government to intervene at this stage. Subject to developments as may arise, and to the approval of the chief commissioner, I propose for the present to confine myself to enforce the tribal responsibilities on the leading *maliks*.”<sup>54</sup>

*Mullah* Walim and his followers were later requested by the Madda Khel *maliks* to leave for Khost province of Afghanistan. However, after spending a month in Khost returned with more than a hundred followers from the Afghan territory for anti British propaganda who used to take oath on the Quran to assist him in mission.<sup>55</sup> In the long term, they did not succeed in carrying the mission thanks to the British activeness in the area.

The situation in South Waziristan was worse where the British authorities were afraid of the spread of Khudai Khidmatgar movement. A secret letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> July 1931, from the British resident officer in Waziristan addressing the Chief Commissioner and chief secretary of NWFP for the information of the India office London and Secretary of State for India feared the arrival of Red Shirts in South Waziristan and say that:

“*Mullah* Fazal Din (Son of Powinda *Mullah*) in the Kaniguram area of South Waziristan was holding *Jirgas* of the Mehsud tribe and advising them to get united and refrain from disputes with Wazir and Bhattani tribes. If any stranger appeared among them, they should ensure his safety, treat him well and give all such information as he might require. If any stranger is molested by any person, a fine of Rs. 12000 would be levied. They should not allow further road construction unless their rate for labour was quadrupled and local Khasadars doubled. However, he did not advise the people to oppose the road by force as the government was all powerful. The building of roads was also a serious concern for the Afridis. They should present their complaints peacefully. If these were ignored then *they* should appeal to the king of Islam in Afghanistan (Nadir Shah) that how they were being treated by the tyrannical government. He appealed to the tribe to abandon the making of the road; If they could not do this they should insist on an alignment that would leave them as free from interference as possible. Finally, the *mullah* assured the

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<sup>54</sup> India Office, “Letter No. 1270-S from the Resident in Waziristan to the Chief Commissioner North West Frontier Province”, 10<sup>th</sup> August 1931, IOR.L.PS.12.3123

<sup>55</sup> India Office, North West Frontier Diary No. 30, 1<sup>st</sup> August 1931, IOR/L/PS/12/3123



tribesmen that he was actuated only by the welfare of the tribe and that he would in all matters abide by the wishes of leading elders.”<sup>56</sup>

Interestingly, the British officer in his comments at the end of the letter forwarded to the Secretary of State for India on 16<sup>th</sup> July writes that the speech of the *Mullah* indicates the arrival of the Red Shirts in the Mehsud area and according to reports; he was receiving communications from the settled districts of the frontier. However, the *mullah* did not have any desire of causing a tribal uprising at the moment.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, a letter by more than three dozens *maliks* from South Waziristan dated 29<sup>th</sup> January 1932 was received by the political agent which was forwarded to the British resident officer, DSP, DIG and Chief Commissioner of the province saying that the people of Waziristan request the government that the Congress workers should not be treated unjustly and the leaders be released.<sup>58</sup> The *maliks* had also sent a letter to the Zamindar newspaper on 21<sup>st</sup> January for the information of the government that the people of Waziristan are displeased on the arrest of the Congress leaders and harsh treatment meted out to the common workers.<sup>59</sup> This clearly shows that the nationalist propaganda had spread not only in Kohat, D.I. Khan and Bannu but also to the semi-independent tribal agencies. It should be noted that many villages in Waziristan have been heavily bombarded from airplanes since their early encounters with the British in the 1890s and been compelled to enter into agreements with the British Indian government. The Mehsud tribe in Waziristan in particular has even attacked British installations and check posts in 1917 during the First World War and their villages were bombed heavily.<sup>60</sup> A detailed nine pages confession of Khaisor Khan of Langar Khel who was a

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<sup>56</sup> India Office, “Letter from the Resident in Waziristan to the chief commissioner and chief secretary of NWFP”, 6<sup>th</sup> July 1931, IOR/L/PS/12/3123

<sup>57</sup> Ibid;

<sup>58</sup> India Office, “Memo by Political Agent South Waziristan to the Resident in Waziristan, No. 159-S. IOR./L/PS/12/3122

<sup>59</sup> Ibid;

<sup>60</sup> India Office, “Mehsud operations in 1917”, IOR/L/MIL/7/15934



prominent leader during the disturbances of 1930 to the political agent of South Waziristan dated 27<sup>th</sup> September 1930 draws a complete picture of the situation in the area and the players involved in the disturbances. Regarding Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his activities before the agitation says that:

*Mullah* Najibullah being studied at Peshawar himself used to visit Abdul Ghaffar Khan in Utmanzai as his nephews sons had spent 6 years in the Utmanzai Azad School. In February 1930, the *mullah* was visiting Utmanzai and Ramzan gave him a letter addressed to Abdul Ghaffar Khan and asking for someone to start agitation in the Mehsud territory. After spending 10-12 days with Ghaffar Khan, two letters were brought by the *mullah*. One was meant for Ramazan (Shaman Khel) who was claiming to be the Firqa Mashar and other letter for Muhammad Yousaf commonly known as Bannuchi *Mullah*. Abdul Ghaffar wrote extolling the Mehsuds and impressing on them the value of unity. He stated that the rest of India was up but as the government *has* emaciated the people down the country and deprived the people of the arms and other belongings. It behooves the inhabitants of the Frontier to be stalwart. Continuing, Abdul Ghaffar Khan stated that the Mehsud should not yet rise but at all costs established unity among themselves and be prepared for any subsequent action that they might be called on for. In his letter to Muhammad Yousaf whom he described as his lieutenant for affairs in Waziristan, he impressed on him to go to Ramazan who was a man of position and respect and should be afforded all assistance. After his return from Peshawar, the *mullah* stayed for two days in Bannu. He also wrote an open letter to the Mehsud tribe extolling the virtues of Muhammad Yousaf to Ramazan.<sup>61</sup>

This clearly shows that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was not in favor of attacking the British, so far as the tribes have not been unified. However, Abdul Ghaffar Khan was in communication with *mullah* Muhammad Yousaf and Abdul Jalil of Bannu who were instrumental in fomenting armed resistance of Mehsud and Wazir tribes and later escaped to the Khost province of Afghanistan on the border with North Waziristan where they were not only a threat for the British authorities in

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<sup>61</sup> India Office Record Library, "Secret Memorandum No. 309-S from Political Agent South Waziristan to Resident in Waziristan, Razmak, R.E.H. Griffith", 27<sup>th</sup> September 1930 Also forwarded to office of the Chief Commissioner NWFP on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1930 and to the British Minister at Kabul, Officer of the intelligence Bureau



Waziristan but also the Afghan King Nadir Shah for being pro British. Muhammad Yousaf was an Assistant Secretary of the Congress Bannu Committee and claimed to be the envoy of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Gandhi.<sup>62</sup> The nationalists of Congress and Khudai Khidmatgar Organization from D.I. Khan and Bannu used to send money to the hostile groups for attacking the British at various places.<sup>63</sup> The Khudai Khidmatgars of Bannu were reported to have collected and sent rupees 2,000 to Abdul Jalil and Muhammad Yousaf. Interestingly, the three emissaries from D.I. Khan Committee of the Congress were two Hindus and one Sikh who used to speak fluent Pashto and holding *Jirgas* with the Mehsud tribes armed with rifles. These members used to sit in the *Jirgas* in Ladah, Kaniguram, Sararogha, Badar, Makin, Shaktoi and Sham areas. Two of them, Mohan Lal and Chela Ram were arrested from Kaniguram and sentenced to three years imprisonment for inciting the tribes and causing destruction to the government property after their confession. They had succeeded in July 1930, for collecting a *Lashkar* of over five thousand Mehsud tribesmen and attacked the British check post between Sararogha and Razmak destroying all the government property.<sup>64</sup> A column from Razmak was sent and the *Lashkar* was dispersed with the help of airplanes. Many encounters of the Mehsud tribes took place where dozens of people were killed from both sides. The death toll was high on the part of the tribes due to the strong military might of the British along with the use of air force. Not only the hostile *Lashkars* would be bombed from the airplanes but the villages of the concerned tribes changed in to rubble by applying the collective responsibility clause of Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). An air blocked would be imposed in the area. As a result, the people would get short of funds, ammunition and would sustain starvation.

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<sup>62</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 93

<sup>63</sup> India Office Record Library, "Secret Memorandum No. 309-S from Political Agent South Waziristan to Resident in Waziristan, Razmak, R.E.H. Griffith", 27<sup>th</sup> September 1930, IOR./L/PS/12/3122

<sup>64</sup> India Office, "Memorandum from Chief Commissioner to Secretary Political Department India Office London", No. 3846- P.C., dated 30<sup>th</sup> September 1930, IOR./L/PS/12/3122



Apart from these hostile and underground activities, many of the tribal leading *maliks* as in the rest of the tribal agencies were allowance holders of the British and were responsible for ensuring good behavior of the tribes towards the British authorities. At the same time, the Afghan King Nadir Khan, who was actively supported by the frontier tribes in overthrowing Habibullah popularly known as Bacha Saqao in 1929 from the Afghan capital regularly paid allowances to tribal *maliks* for remaining loyal to him. Ironically, the Afghan King who had assured Abdul Ghaffar Khan before capturing the throne of Kabul that his struggle was for restoring the deposed revolutionary Afghan King Amanullah Khan, became a stalwart of the British interests for his own Kingship. Instead of calling Amanullah Khan from exile who was the favorite of the Pakhtun nationalist of the North-West Frontier Province, the new Afghan King warned the tribal *maliks* to be loyal to the British as they were friends of Afghanistan and the King. Powerful Mehsud elders like Ramazan and Fazal Din were instructed not to attack the British and were not only given allowances but also lands in Afghanistan. The reason behind stopping the hostiles from anti British activities was not only saving the tribes from British destruction but also to portray his Kingship as beneficial to the British interests in the region on the one hand and have influence in the powerful tribes for protecting his own Kingship against hostile Afghan tribes on the other. Allowances were given only to those influential tribal leaders who were pro Afghan and pro British.

Interestingly, the Pakhtun tribes on the Afghan side of Durand Line like Ghalji, Tanni and Zadran in Khost province of Afghanistan bordering North Waziristan were also warned of dire consequences if they joined the *Lashkars* against the British on the Indian side of the Durand Line. It is noteworthy to mention that if the tribes on the British side of the Durand Line had played the role of King Makers and breakers in Afghanistan, the tribes on Afghan side of the



Durand Line also played a role in assisting the frontier tribes in the resistance against the British. The Afghan Kings had to pay allowances to the frontier tribes for being loyal to Kabul and sustaining their Kingship. Hence, the policy of the Afghan rulers has always played a role in giving directions to the frontier tribes in lieu of their allowances. The Afghan allowance holders in Waziristan viz Abdullah Jan, Shergai and others in Birmal area received a royal *farman* (official order) from the Afghan King warning the Afghan officials and all those involved in anti British activities on both sides of the Durand Line to refrain from working against the British as he trusted them more than the Russians for consolidating his rule.<sup>65</sup> *Mullah* Fazal Din, who was reported by the British to have the backing of Red Shirts or Khudai Khidmatgars from the settled districts of the frontier and organizing the tribes for non-cooperation with the British also started communication with the Afghan government presenting himself as the leader of all the tribes of Waziristan and also informing the Afghan rulers about recruitment and spread of the Red Shirts in the North- West Frontier.<sup>66</sup>

Apart from receiving Afghan allowances, hundreds of the frontier tribesmen not only from Waziristan but all the tribal agencies were serving in the Afghan civil military departments. They were enlisted in the Afghan militia in Afghanistan with ranks from Khasadar, Naik, Havildar, Subidar, Captain, Colonel, Brigadier and *Firqa masher* with their monthly salaries as 30, 31, 32, 45, 70, 160, 275 and 500 rupees respectively.<sup>67</sup> More than two hundred and seventy two elders of the Ahmadzai sub section of Wazir tribe were receiving allowances from the Afghan King starting from 40 to 1500 and in special cases up to 6000 Kabuli rupees per annum.<sup>68</sup> Similar was

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<sup>65</sup> India Office, "Memorandum from Lieutenant Colonel R. E. H. Griffith, Resident in Waziristan to the Chief Commissioner North-West frontier, Natia Gali", No. 1272-S, 10<sup>th</sup> August 1931, IOR/L/PS/12/3123

<sup>66</sup> Ibid;

<sup>67</sup> Ibid;

<sup>68</sup> India Office," Express letter No. 135-M from Chief Commissioner, North- West Frontier to Secretary Political Department, India Office London for information of Secretary of state for India", 24<sup>th</sup> September 1931 IOR/L/PS/12/3123



the case with other tribes in the tribal agencies where half of the elders would receive British allowances while others from the Afghan rulers for their loyalty towards the former and the later respectively. In these circumstances, loyalty to the British by the Afghan King means that he could exert pressure on the tribes to come to terms with the former. The Afghan King in his *farman* warned the Ahmadzai Wazir tribal elders who were receiving Afghan allowances to discontinue their anti British propaganda and activities as he considered them as friends of Afghanistan.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, the British Legation in Kabul and Indian Political Department were in regular contact and communication with Nadir Khan and his Prime Minister Hashim Khan. The Afghan Foreign Minister informed and complained about the anti Nadir Shah campaign of the Congress leaders in the Frontier tribes and southern province of Afghanistan which was ultimately against the interests of the British Indian government in India and Afghan Kingship in Afghanistan.<sup>70</sup> At the same time, the Prime Minister Hashim Khan continuously talked to the British minister about the repercussions of the Afghan government's refusal to help the tribes against the British repression and the Congress activities against the Afghan government. A group of eighty Shinwari elders of Khyber region were called on to Kabul by the Prime Minister in order to forbid them from joining the Afridi *Lashkars* against the British.<sup>71</sup> The internal position of the Afghan government was weak. This was one of the reasons, the British allowed the Afghan government for giving allowances to the tribes on the British side of the border. However, the British government also ensured that the Afghan government was loyal to them. Despite receiving allowances from both the governments of India and Afghanistan, the tribesmen proved trouble makers to the British *Raj*. In convincing the tribesmen for having good relations

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<sup>69</sup> India Office, "North West Frontier Diary", No. 30, 1<sup>st</sup> August 1931, IOR/L/PS/12/3123

<sup>70</sup> India Office, "Letter from Afghan Foreign Minister to the British Minister at Kabul, dated", 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1930, Forwarded to the Secretary of State for India, dated 6<sup>th</sup> December 1930, IOR./L/PS/12/3122

<sup>71</sup> India Office, "Telegram from British Minister at Kabul to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs", 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1930, IOR./L/PS/12/3122



with the British, the Afghan government was indirectly working against the objective of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement whose aim was non cooperation and resisting the British in India. The Khudai Khidmatgars and the Frontier tribes thus proved not only a source of continuous trouble for the British in India but also the Afghan Kingship. The tribesmen however made it sure that they stood with the oppressed people of the North- West Frontier. The instinct for retaining their freedom and passion for helping the people of the settled districts engaged the Afridi, Mohmand, Wazir and Mehsud tribes who did not sat idle to the happenings in the North- West Frontier Province at the cost of losing their lives and properties. Resultantly, the number of force deploying in the semi-independent tribes increased manifold. In 1923, about seventeen British battalions were posted in Waziristan. In the 1930s, there were almost twenty eight battalions in Waziristan having more British troops than the rest of the Indian sub continent.<sup>72</sup>

### **3.6 Afridis Attack**

The Afridis being an influential tribe and custodians of the historical Khyber Pass between India and Central Asia reacted strongly and played an important role immediately after the killings of Khudai Khidmagars and peaceful protesters at Peshawar on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1930.<sup>73</sup> They made a forceful demonstration in order to show their sympathy with their brothers against the British suppression of peaceful protesters.<sup>74</sup> The attack was undoubtedly motivated by the massacre at Qissa Khwani Bazar. George Cunningham in October 1938 writes that the Afridis relations with the British government on the whole, have remained excellent with the exception of the 1930 attacks due to Red Shirt trouble in the province.<sup>75</sup> According to Christian Tripodi, the attack was

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<sup>72</sup> Fazal Rehim and Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Afghanistan and the Frontier*, ed, Ahmad, "Pakhtun Tribes in the Great Game", (Peshawar: Emjay Books International, 1993), 193

<sup>73</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 62

<sup>74</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 45

<sup>75</sup> India office, "Notes on the North- West Frontier Policy", October 1938, Mss Eur D670/13



a reaction of the Afridis over the killings of Khudai Khidmatgars by the British forces at Qissa Khani Bazar Peshawar.<sup>76</sup>

After collecting a *Lashkar* of more than 2000 men, the Afridis entered Peshawar on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1930. According to James W. Spain, the *Lashkar* was 5000 strong armed men and Martial Law was imposed all over the Frontier on 15<sup>th</sup> August.<sup>77</sup> Initial skirmishes took place with three regiments viz Rajput, Kurram Militia and the Sikhs along with heavy machine guns near Khwarh, Yarghajo and Shaikh Muhammadi. Several British soldiers were killed and few Afridi laid their lives whose bodies were sent to their homes on the horses captured from the British during the fighting.<sup>78</sup> After three days of fighting at different points near the Khwarh, the British were forced to retreat from the check posts and started bombardment of the Afridi areas in Khyber and Tirah from airplanes. As a result, the *Lashkar* came out from its hiding places and the fight was taken to the historical Bala Hisaar fort in the center of Peshawar city. Railway lines and telephone wires were damaged on their way. The British forces were too strong with heavy weapons and artillery that the armed Afridi *Lashkar* was forced to take shelter in the nearby gardens in Peshawar taking away a large number of rifles along with them.<sup>79</sup> Many Afridis embraced martyrdom at the hands of the British forces as they could not withstand the mighty British Indian force in the city.<sup>80</sup>

The war continued for six months until the Afridis came to terms with the British. Neither the newly formed Afghan government under King Nadir Khan could promise any definite help to the Afridi delegation in Kabul nor did they succeed in mobilizing other tribes to their side.<sup>81</sup> The

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<sup>76</sup> Tripodi "Negotiating with the Enemy, 596

<sup>77</sup> Spain, *The Pathan Borderland*, 166

<sup>78</sup> Peshawar Archives, "Special Branch Report", , File No. 710, 14<sup>th</sup> October 1930, Bundle No. 44, Serial No. 701-15

<sup>79</sup> Ibid;

<sup>80</sup> Shah, *Azadi ki Talash*, 23

<sup>81</sup> India Office, "North West Frontier Diary", No. 30, 1<sup>st</sup> August 1931, IOR/L/PS/12/3123



tribes would use to pledge their allegiance in principle to the Afghan throne in Kabul, they expected certain degree of support in return.<sup>82</sup> However, the Afghan Prime Minister, Hashim Khan flatly told the delegation of the Afridis that they should ask the Congress for help which was responsible for creating the situation.<sup>83</sup> The British Indian air force used to bomb common villages, worship places along with women and children without any regard for human rights and values and can not be justified as collective responsibility clause of Frontier Crimes Regulation.<sup>84</sup> The real fighters were not living in the villages that were being bombed heavily.

The British believed that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was behind every trouble in the tribal belt. However, the charge was baseless and the tribal *Lashkars* were never invited by the Khudai Khidmatgar leadership of the province.<sup>85</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan may not be directly involved in inviting the tribes, other members who later developed differences with him may seem to have contact with the Afridis. Moreover, the speeches in favor of freedom and against the British by Abdul Ghaffar were certainly influencing the tribal mind. The Afghan King Nadir Shah was allowed to form Afghan *militia* of the influential tribes within the British territory.<sup>86</sup> Being target of the British themselves, these leaders could not extend any active help to the Afridis. The Khudai Khidmatgars of the province however, supported the anti British tribes morally and politically in terms of propagating their cause on all India level thereby exposing the barbarous policy of bombing the Tirah tribal region. In addition to taking the worst situation of the tribes to the Indian legislature and the Congress leaders by Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the local Khudai Khidmatgars and the Congress workers informed the people of Peshawar valley about sacrifices

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<sup>82</sup> Christian Tripodi, "Politicals' Tribes and Masahibans: The Indian Political Service and the Anglo- Afghan Relations 1929-1939, *The International History Review*, Vol. 34, No. 4, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, December 2012, p. 668 Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2012.690203>

<sup>83</sup> India Office, "Telegram from Minister Kabul to Secretary of state for foreign affairs, New Delhi", 24<sup>th</sup> December 1930, IOR/R/12/47

<sup>84</sup> Qaiyum, *Gold and Guns*, 56

<sup>85</sup> Ibid; 44

<sup>86</sup> Tripodi, 'Politicals' Tribes and Masahibans", 872



of the tribes for the freedom of the land. Posters in Urdu were placarded in Peshawar on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1930 for the information of all the inhabitants titled, “why were the Brave Afridi fighting” stating that:

“It was clear like day light to the Indian nation that before the present ‘Tirah War’, Mahatma Gandhi and other political leaders were being fed up of the British despotism had started civil disobedience movement. As a result of the tyrannical rule of the British, the brave Afridis who themselves are free from the evil scourge of slavery wish to see others in a free country. For our (people in the settled areas of NWFP) sake, they engaged themselves in a war with the greatest blood thirsty and devilish government of Britannia (Briton). They have shown to the world what brotherhood and sympathy is? If they prepare themselves to submit to a few proposals of the government, the devilish government would be ready to grant them crores of rupees. But by refusing with contempt to accept the offer of the government is giving us a lesson that they have sacrificed. But we do not even raise a voice in their favour. Brothers! On our account, the question of life and death of the Afridis has come into issue. It is therefore, the duty of every Hindu, Muslim and Sikh to assist this handful of people if we have true love for our country and nation.”<sup>87</sup>

However, the bombing in Tirah and the British oppression over the Afridi tribes was brutal and they were in need of a great political support from the Indians due to the propensity of the British attacks on villages. A letter from the Qambar Khel Afridi tribe to the Indians titled “A message to the Indians” says:

“All the Indians should know why the Afridis have jumped out into the field with swords in their hands. It is against the repression of the British on the Indians that they have waged war against the government. Let our Indian brethren know that the Afridis will continue to fight until the British comes to an understanding with the Indians. We would not change our determination even if we are forced to live on the leaves of trees and wear the skins of animals. We have sent our messengers in three directions, Kabul (capital of Afghanistan), Mohmand and Bajaur region and Waziristan. We hope and expect that they will return

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<sup>87</sup> Peshawar Archives, “Special Branch Report”, IIS Diary, 17<sup>th</sup> November 1930, Bundle No. 44, File No. 710, (Author’s Translation)



successful. At present, we have kept two thousands volunteers in the Kajuri plains to fight the British.

However, it is very sad and strange that the Indians have not even shown their bare sympathy towards us.<sup>88</sup>

Provoked by the attacks of the Afridis, the Chief Commissioner Stuart Pears recommended the occupation of the Afridi territory in Khyber and Tirah. The logic behind the occupation was not his duty to the province *per se*, but ramifications of the unhindered tribal resistance in the wider context of political conditions in the province courtesy of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization of the Pakhtun nationalists.<sup>89</sup> The Kajuri plain in the outskirts of Peshawar was properly annexed and occupied by the British authorities under as a punishment for their attacks on the British forces and Peshawar city.<sup>90</sup> The Afridis of Tirah used to migrate to these plains in winter.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, a blockade of all kinds of items including food was imposed upon the Afridis. The strength of the Afridi position over the British rested on their dependence on Peshawar district.<sup>92</sup> Another letter from the Afridi tribe circulated in Peshawar city complaining about the occupation of their area by the Indians serving in the British military and working for the interests of the *raj* says that:

“Oh dear ones: the Afridis were an independent people and the British showed great favors and kindness and held us in high esteem. But when tyranny was started in India, the Afridis disregarded all favors and honor for the cause of the nation and religion. In return for that sympathy, the Indians and the people of the province have taken possession of our country and are cutting off with the dagger of tyranny our dear lives which we were sacrificing for your sake. What sort of brotherhood and fraternity is it? Other nations will blame you and looked down upon you that how the Afridis were moved by conditions in India and how

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<sup>88</sup> Peshawar archives, “Special Branch Report”, IIS Diary, 12<sup>th</sup> January 1931, Bundle No. 44, File No. 710, Copy of the letter was also requested by IB, Home Department, New Delhi on 29<sup>th</sup> Jan 1931 from the DIG of police Peshawar. (author’s translation)

<sup>89</sup> Tripodi, ‘Politicals’ Tribes and Masahibans, 871

<sup>90</sup> India Office, “Memorandum of the Viceroy about the policy on the North- West Frontier”, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, IOR/L/PS/12/3265

<sup>91</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 61-62

<sup>92</sup> India Office, “Note on the North-West Frontier Policy by the Governor”, October 1938, Mss Eur D670/13



India expressed its gratitude. It is therefore hoped that on the receipt of this notice you will publish it for the information of all the public and military men so that they may also have sympathy with us".<sup>93</sup>

The office of the Chief Commissioner was reported on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1931 by an informant who had just returned from Tirah that the Afridis have formed thirty groups of three hundred men in each group that would attack Peshawar district and that two men who belonged to Rajjar and Sheo Dag from Hashtnagar (Charsadda) were informing the Afridis about the events in Peshawar and Utmanzai.<sup>94</sup> It should be noted that the total strength of fighting age of Afridi tribe in Khyber agency together with Afridis of Dara Adam Khel, Kohat and those living on the border with Peshawar in 1931 was 43,030 men.<sup>95</sup> During the attacks on Peshawar, incidents of looting the Hindu and Sikh minorities took place and the authorities were blaming the Afridis for the acts. However, posters written in Urdu were placarded in Peshawar city warning the people of the British tactics and creating dissension between the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities. It further declared the looting of non-Muslim communities as the work of British paid agents that cannot refrain the people from achieving independence.<sup>96</sup>

The Khudai Khidmatgars succeeded in propagating the cause of the Afridis. At the annual Congress session in Karachi on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1931, a resolution was placed by Pandit Jawaharlal seconded by Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Pir Bakhsh Khan that won the sympathy of Indian people in favor of Afridis and against the barbarous policies of the British.<sup>97</sup> Letters of thanks written in Persian, Urdu and Pashto were found in Sadar Bazar, Rampora, and Sabzi Mandi of Peshawar addressing the Mohmands, the Afridis, the Shinwaris, the Wazirs and Mesuds, the Khattaks, Haji

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<sup>93</sup> Peshawar Archives, "Special Branch", IIS Diary, 12<sup>th</sup> January 1931, Bundle No. 44, File No. 710, (author's translation)

<sup>94</sup> Ibid;

<sup>95</sup> Peshawar archives, "Statement of Fighting Strength and Armaments of the Trans frontier tribes on the North-West Frontier cis Durand Line", Compiled by the Office of the Chief Commissioner, North West Frontier Province and updated on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1931, IOR/R/12/57

<sup>96</sup> Peshawar Archives, "Special Branch", IIS Diary, 12<sup>th</sup> January 1931, Bundle No. 44, File No. 710, (author's translation)

<sup>97</sup> Ibid;



Sahib of Turangzai and all others for rendering great help to the oppressed Indians whose religions and social rights were being disregarded and treated with tyranny and repression.<sup>98</sup> Sympathy was shown with the 18<sup>th</sup> Gharwal regiment who had refused to fire on peaceful protesters on 23<sup>rd</sup> April in Peshawar who were being Court Martialed and whose children were living in destitute condition.<sup>99</sup>

The martyr's day was observed throughout the province and published by the *Hindustan Times*, *Bandi Matram*, *Zamindar* and *Bombay Chronicle*, the *Hindu Herald* and many others covered with pictures of the peaceful processions taken out in large numbers in memory of the martyrs and pictures of the happenings on 23<sup>rd</sup> April in Qissa Khwani Bazar.<sup>100</sup> The provincial Congress members, the Naujawan Bharat Sabha and other associations participated in a peaceful way.<sup>101</sup> In Peshawar city, the day was observed under the armed police and was led by Sayed Lal Badshah, Sayed Qasim Jan, Sardar Amar Singh and Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Afterwards, a meeting of fifty thousand people was held in which resolution of offering prayers for the souls of the martyrs was passed.<sup>102</sup> The procession was one mile in length.<sup>103</sup> The *Hindu Herald* reported on 26 April 1931 that inspired by the protests in Peshawar and Kohat, some of the Khattak *maliks* requested the Kohat committee to constitute and organize committees in Karak for peaceful processions in the area.<sup>104</sup> The most significant event was that the issue of keeping the tribal area as a match box came to the forefront and policy of the British was criticized by the Indian press and nationalist political parties.

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid;

<sup>99</sup> Ibid;

<sup>100</sup> Peshawar Archives, "Special Branch Report", Bundle No. 39, Vol No, 1, Serial No. 637, File No, 3352,

<sup>101</sup> Ibid;

<sup>102</sup> Ibid;

<sup>103</sup> Ibid;

<sup>104</sup> Ibid;



### 3.7 Affiliation of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement with the Congress

After the arrest of Abdul Ghaffar Khan along with other colleagues in April 1930, the movement got momentum and the British increased their atrocities throughout India and particularly in the NWFP crossed all limits of repression and empty slogans of human rights which is evident from the wholesale killings and arrests of the people. Sir, Sahibzada Abdul Qayum Khan looking at the worst condition of the Pakhtuns and the atrocities of the authorities over the non-violent Khudai Khidmatgars secretly informed Mian Abdullah Shah and Mian Jahfar Shah who had escaped arrest and went underground to see Abdul Ghaffar Khan and suggested to affiliate the Khudai Khidmatgar organization with one of the major political parties. They succeeded in managing a meeting with Abdul Ghaffar Khan in Gujrat jail and informed him and other prominent members of the Khudai Khidmatgars and the deplorable situation of the people in the province.<sup>105</sup> Mid night house searches were common without any regard for the sanctity of houses. The properties of the Khudai Khidmatgars were confiscated. Family members of the political prisoners were harassed by the British loyalists. Their crops were destroyed.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan along with colleagues in jail after listening to their horrible stories advised them to inform the Muslim leaders about the pathetic situation in the frontier for seeking political support.<sup>106</sup> Mian Abdullah Shah of Charsadda and Mian Jaffar Shah Kaka Khel consulted other colleagues and met Fazl-i- Hussain and Feroz Khan Noon from Punjab for help who were members of the Viceroy's council and very influential personalities. To their dismay, they were told to sever ties with Afghanistan and to announce an end to the civil disobedience movement. The second option for them was the Congress with whom the Khudai Khidmatgars had already

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<sup>105</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2015), 40

<sup>106</sup> Ghaffar Khan, "Zama Zhwand, 310



started civil disobedience. The Congress response was positive<sup>107</sup> and offered their support to the Khudai Khidmatgars on the condition of following a strict non-violent approach in the political struggle which was already the policy of Abdul Ghaffar Khan since 1915 and affiliation of the organization with the Congress. The non-violent approach was the reason that Abdul Ghaffar Khan had developed differences with the Haji of Turangzai about *jihad* at the time, when the people were disorganized, weak and unable to fight a powerful empire. Abdul Ghaffar Khan during his long struggle had reached the conclusion that the Pakhtuns could not win a war against the powerful British empire that would only culminate in their destruction.

Mian Jaffar Shah and Abdul Akbar Khan however, were demanding political support without accepting political dominancy of the Congress or loosing the Afghan character of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization. On the contrary, Abdul Ghaffar Khan thought that the Congress was not only the biggest political party of India but also struggling for freedom like the Khudai Khidmatgars of the Frontier. Similarly, there were members like Khadim Muhammad Akbar and others who were against the non-violent approach of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and was also against Hindus. At the same time, they could not either expect support from the All India Muslim League in India nor any help from the Afghan King of Afghanistan. Resultantly, many important leaders left the Khudai Khidmatgar Organization after its affiliation with the Hindu dominated India National Congress.

### **3.8 Gandhi- Irwin Pact**

Before the formal affiliation of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization in August 1931, the Congress Working Committee members were released from Jail on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1931 and Gandhi-Irwin Pact was concluded with the between the government and the Congress. Initially

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<sup>107</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*,40



Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other Frontier nationalists were not released. The provincial authorities were not ready to give any concession to the Pakhtun nationalists and advised the central government not to include the Frontier in the pact. However, Gandhi made it clear to the Viceroy that the release of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Khudai Khidmatgars of the Frontier was a precondition for going with the pact. While the Congress political prisoners were released in the Frontier on 6<sup>th</sup> March, the Khudai Khidmatgars were retained in Jails. However, the decision of the provincial government was overruled by the central government and all the prisoners including Abdul Ghaffar Khan were released on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1931 and ban on Khudai Khidmatgars lifted the same day.<sup>108</sup>

After their release in March 1931 and before their rearrests in December 1931, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other leaders of the Youth League visited all the districts including a two weeks tour of the three Southern districts of Kohat, Bannu and D.I. Khan in May for reorganizing the Khudai Khidmatgars. He undertook successful visits of Kohat, Karak, Hangu, Bannu, D.I. Khan and Tank politicizing and creating new rural based Khudai Khidmatgar- Congress committees. The authorities wanted to arrest him for inciting the people against the government. However, keeping in view the Gandhi- Irwin pact and expected attitude of Gandhi, the central government restricted the provincial authorities from arresting them as it could terminate the pact and create law and order situation through India.

Prior to the visits of the rural areas, the Khudai Khidmatgars were considered as part of the Congress and Abdul Ghaffar Khan was invited to the Congress annual session at Karachi and he attended it along with other comrades. However, other important members of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization and *Zalmo Jirga* or Youth League i.e. Abdul Akbar Khan, Khadim and Ahmad Shah were not in favour of formal affiliation with the Congress which they saw as

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<sup>108</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 101



looseing their own separate identity.<sup>109</sup> On 27<sup>th</sup> March 1931, he was asked to declare the affiliation of his organization and *Zalmo Jirga* with the Congress which he did.<sup>110</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan was made the leader of the Frontier Congress Committee. The Khudai Khidmatgars were to follow the decisions of the Central Congress Committee and will use the Congress flag. They were, however allowed to call the Frontier Congress as Congress *Jirga*, wearing their own uniforms, undertaking military drills and its organizational structure. However, the formal affiliation with the Congress took place on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1931 and the provincial leadership of the Movement came to be known as the Frontier Congress *Jirga*. Affiliation with the Congress gave the later a considerable legitimacy in the province despite the growing tension between Muslim and Hindu leadership within the Congress.<sup>111</sup> Henceforth, the Congress derived its strength in the frontier from the Khudai Khidmatgar organization with ninety three percent Muslim populations.<sup>112</sup> On the other hand, the Khudai Khidmatgars received widespread recognition and support throughout India. Before their affiliation with the Congress, the Khudai Khidmatgars were kept as isolated and were labeled as Bolshevik's agents due to the fact that many leading members of the *Zalmo Jirga* and Khudai Khidmatgar organization who either left the organization or joined the Muslim league had visited Russia during the *Hijrat* Movement to Afghanistan but came back without success.

### 3.9 Differences within the Khudai Khidmatgars

The affiliation of the organization with the Congress led to serious political differences within the leadership of Khudai Khidmatgar organization. They feared that the *Zalmo Jirga* and Khudai

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<sup>109</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, 41

<sup>110</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *North-West Frontier Province: History and Politics*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2007), 72

<sup>111</sup> Lester, "Peace Profile", 247

<sup>112</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement", 1



Khidmatgar organization would loose the Pakhtun character and ethnic identity in the Hindu dominated Congress. Mian Ahmad Shah (secretary of *Zalmo Jirga*), after quitting the Khudai Khidmatgar organization joined the Khaksar movement of Allama Mashriqi which was declared as illegal by the British and he finally left the party. He had developed differences with Dev das Gandhi during the visit of the later to the Frontier in August before affiliation of the organization with the Congress and made it clear that *Zalmo Jirga* (Youth league) and Khudai Khidmatgar organizations were separate from the Congress with the exception that both were fighting the British and were nonviolent.<sup>113</sup> Similarly, Mian Ahmad Shah complained to Abdul Ghaffar Khan that they extended full hospitality to Dev das Gandhi on his tour of the province but he did not treat him well in India. Khadim Muhammad Akbar also did not approve of the affiliation with the Congress out of his hatred for Hindus. Abdul Ghaffar Khan told them that he had done it as a last resort and with no other option left to expose the British policies of repression in the province. He gave examples from the Islamic history and life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) who had entered into agreements with the Jews and Christians for the protection of Muslim interests in Madina.<sup>114</sup> Khadim Muhammad Akbar and Ahmad Shah (Secretary) formed their own Afghan *Jirga*. However, they were not successful and did not get the popular support from the people of the province. Likewise, Abdul Akbar Khan (President of the Youth League) being part of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization finally joined the Muslim League during the final movement for Pakistan. Mian Jaffar Shah however, rejoined the Khudai Khidmatgar movement. The differences and desertions saddened Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his other associates. The disunity among the leadership weakened the socio- educational aspect of the organization and became a political movement. Ghaffar Khan along with his associates carried on the mission of struggle

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<sup>113</sup> Akbar, *Da Bar-i- Sagheer*, 155-160

<sup>114</sup> Shah, *North-West Frontier Province: History and Politics*, 73



for independence under the flag of the Congress. His strong determination, personal character and commitment to the cause of freedom inspired thousands who struggled with non violence against the British. At the same time, the contention of the deserted Khudai Khidmatgars proved right at the time of partition that the Indian National Congress dominated by Hindus could not be trustworthy and reliable friends of the Khudai Khidmatgars.<sup>115</sup>

The Congress leadership along with the Khudai Khudai Khidmatgars was again arrested in December 1931 after the failure of negotiations at the Second Round Table Conference. The Frontier Congress *Jirga* or committee and the Khudai Khidmatgar organization were declared as unlawful organizations. Every kind of repressive step was taken by the British authorities in the frontier for suppressing the Khudai Khidmatgars. Police were given wide range of powers for dealing with the Khudai Khidmatgar workers. By 1933 the civil disobedience movement became ineffective with occasional agitations in other parts of India. The movement was ultimately called off by Gandhi in April 1934. While all the Congress leaders and workers were released, the Khudai Khidmatgars including the Khan Brothers remained in prisons and the movement banned.<sup>116</sup> The Congress Working Committee demanded the release of the Khudai Khidmatgars. However, the government did not release them until August 1934 as a result of policy shift in the government. The Congress had decided in April to participate in the coming elections and Dr. Khan Sahib was nominated as Congress candidate while he was in jail. The Khan Brothers after releasing from jail were not allowed to enter Punjab or their own province even for the election campaign in their own areas. Accompanied by Gandhi, Abdul Ghaffar Khan attended the annual Congress conference in October 1934 where he was received as a hero and offered the

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<sup>115</sup> Akbar, *Da Bar-i- Sagheer*, 183

<sup>116</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 37



presidency of congress which he humbly rejected.<sup>117</sup> Being debarred from his own province, he decided to go to Bengal and delivered speeches which were considered as seditious by the government and was rearrested on 7<sup>th</sup> December, and awarded two years rigorous imprisonment under section 124 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).<sup>118</sup> He was finally released only on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1937 by Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayum Khan who remained Chief Minister of the NWFP from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1937 till 7<sup>th</sup> September 1937.

The civil disobedience proved as a failure at large in gaining its objective of independence thanks to the large scale arrests, killings, and inhuman treatment of the prisoners particularly those of the Khudai Khidmatgars in the NWFP. However, owing to the strategically vulnerable position of the province and strict regulations of FCR, the British authorities had never expected such a political mobilization of the common people. The only peaceful areas in the frontier were the state of Swat, Dir and Bunir where the Wali of Swat proved loyal and worked for protecting the interests of the British Indian government.<sup>119</sup> Despite, the failure of the movement, the Congress shaped itself as the sole representative political party of the Indians winning majority of seats and forming ministries in eight out of eleven Indian Governor provinces during 1936-37 elections. However, the Congress depended on the strength of the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Muslim majority North-West province of India where it emerged as a political force. Moreover, the government in order to pacify the Frontier nationalist Muslims and other political leaders had already announced reforms for NWFP which were previously denied and were the long standing demands of the political leaders. The Chief Commissioner was replaced with Governor as Chief Executive with a legislature where the total number of legislators in the Frontier Assembly was fifty. However, these steps could not satisfy the frontier nationalists who took active part in the

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<sup>117</sup> Lester, "Peace Profile", 247

<sup>118</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 37

<sup>119</sup> India Office, "Note of the Governor on the events in the North West Frontier", Mss Eur D670/13



civil disobedience. The Government announced general elections at the end of the round table conferences and civil disobedience movement. As per decision of the Congress Working Committee, the Khudai Khidmatgars and the provincial Congress *Jirga* took part in the elections and succeeded in gaining nineteen out of fifty seats in 1936-37. However, the aggressive policy of the British in the tribal area and the steps taken by the provincial Congress ministry led to the communalization of events and politics in the province which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.



## Chapter Four

### British Policies towards the Tribal Area and its Impact on the Settled Districts of NWFP (1935-1939)

The occupation of the central regions within the tribal agencies was started in 1922 after the Third Anglo- Afghan War (1919) under the policy of ‘gradual peaceful penetration’ and to use force where misbehavior of the tribes afforded or necessitated an opportunity.<sup>1</sup> The British increased allowances of the tribal *maliks* from 130,000 rupees in 1919 to 280,000 in 1925 in Waziristan only.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the increase in allowances, aerial bombardment of the trouble spots was also undertaken. By 1925, the attacks on military check posts in the tribal areas were wiped out.<sup>3</sup> Gradually, the British increased their control over the frontier tribes. Successful implementation of the policy enabled the British authorities to order construction of roads in the tribal area after passing the Government of India Act of 1935 for giving representation to the Indians. It was a kind of a modified forward policy aimed at establishing writ of the government by building roads for better communication of the troops. A circular road from Dir to Tirah passing through Bajaur, Mohamand and Orakzai was started.<sup>4</sup> This policy towards the tribal area was criticized by the Congress leaders in Peshawar and Delhi as they knew that the tribes will react to any further advance in their area. Hence, sporadic attacks by the tribes during construction of the roads necessitated strong action by the government.

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<sup>1</sup> India Office Record Library, “Memorandum of the Viceroy about the policy on the North- West Frontier”, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, IOR/L/PS/12/3265

<sup>2</sup> Sana Haroon. *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, (London: Hurst & Company Publishers, 2007), 128

<sup>3</sup> Ibid;

<sup>4</sup> IORL, “Memorandum of the Viceroy”, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939



In the post 1935 period, the British policy became more aggressive.<sup>5</sup> The Governor in his proclamation to the Mohmand tribe in 1935, while giving surety of protecting their privacy and internal affairs threatened them of complete destruction in case of any further attack during construction of the road.<sup>6</sup> The major tribes of Mohmands, Wazirs, Mehsuds, Afridis and Bhattanis were more resistive as compare to other tribes of the frontier. This was one of the reasons that portions of these tribes who were residing on the administrative border with the districts joined the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement and the Congress in greater numbers. The Khudai Khidmatgars of the same tribes in the districts were in regular communication with the hostile leaders and *Lashkars* in the semi-autonomous tribal agencies.

The struggle of Haji Sahib of Turangzai in Mohmand area and the emergence of Faqir of Ipi in Waziristan in the 1930s should also be looked in the context of struggle against imperialism rather than just an abrupt religious uprising. Undoubtedly, the communal steps of Sarda Act, the approval of the government for demolition of Shaheedganj Mosque Lahore in April 1936 allegedly constructed on Sikh *gurdwara*, and the handing over of Islam Bibi, a Hindu convert to Islam who was married to a Pakhtun school teacher Noor Ali Shah to her family added to the already enraged tribes who thought that after occupation of their areas, the British finally had started interfering in their religion. Sir George Cunningham, the Frontier Governor, while analyzing the situation in Waziristan writes that immediate cause of the Faqir of Ipi's struggle against the British in 1936 was the matter of Islam Bibi and political situation in Bannu.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Christian Tripodi, 'Political Tribes and Masahibans: The Indian Political Service and the Anglo- Afghan Relations 1929-1939, *The International History Review*, Vol. 34, No. 4, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, (December 2012), p, 867, Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2012.690203>

<sup>6</sup> India Office, "Governor's Proclamation to the Tribes 1935", Mss Eur D998/10, copy of the proclamation by the Governor for the Mohmand tribes is available with the author. The Governor tried to assure them that the British authorities had no intention of interfering with their internal affairs and to allow the government for the construction of the road. Otherwise, the threat of complete annihilation of the tribe was given in case of not behaving and carrying out more attacks against the government installations.

<sup>7</sup> IORL, "Note on the North- West frontier Policy", October 1938, Mss Eur D670/13



However, the tribesmen have felt that their independence was being threatened more and more since the occupation of their area and the *Kashraan* (young generation) of the tribesmen joined their struggle against the British.<sup>8</sup>

Owing to the oppressive policy of the government in the settled districts, presence of large number of British soldiers, constructing roads and the occurring of religious events led to the struggle of Faqir Ipi in Waziristan and bombardment of common villages by the Royal Air Force as a collective punishment of the tribes. Resultantly, it became difficult for the Faqir of Ipi in Waziristan to face the enemy on the ground in Waziristan. Every hostile attack of the tribes was avenged by bombing the villages harboring the Faqir and his followers (see appendix 1). Two to five thousand copies of notices would be dropped from aeroplanes warning the tribes about their punishment. For instance, a warning to Aarsal Kot in Shakto area of Waziristan was dropped on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1937 for expelling the hostile *Lashkar* of the Faqir of Ipi or bearing the consequences (see appendix 2). On failing to expel the Faqir, the nearby villages were bombed and destroyed on 16<sup>th</sup> March as a collective punishment of the tribes (see appendix 3).<sup>9</sup> In order to minimize human casualties and destruction of common villagers, the Faqir started living in caves away from the population. It is interesting to note that the Pakhtun tribes of Afghanistan were also joining the Faqir *Lashkar* on daily basis.

The Afghan government however, was not only trying to pressurize their own tribes from joining the Faqir but also tried to convince the Faqir to come to terms with the British. He was discouraged from entering into the Afghan territory. It was becoming difficult for the Faqir to confront the British in Waziristan and started sending tribal armed groups to district Bannu and D.I. Khan for destroying government properties. The attacks of these groups in the settled

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid;

<sup>9</sup> India Office Record Library, File No, IOR/R/12/70, Waziristan February 1937- March 1937, 74



districts increased the communal situation in Bannu and D.I Khan in the aftermath of Islam Bibi's episode and the struggle became more a religious one rather than the growing discontent among the tribes due to the British encroachment in their areas.

The hostile *Lashkars* in order to avenge against the bombing started damaging government properties and kidnapping religious minorities thereby created law and order situation for the new provincial government formed by Dr. Khan Sahib in September 1937. Moreover, various bills were passed by the new ministry of the province for bringing financial and social improvement in the lives of rural population by curtailing the perks and privileges of the big Khans. Henceforth, they alleged the provincial Congress ministry of supporting Hindus and started relying on the All India Muslim League and capitalizing every communal incident for protecting their lost interests. However, the start of the Second World War led to the resignation of Dr. Khan's ministry as per decision of the Central Working Committee of the Congress.<sup>10</sup> All these factors contributed to the law and order and communal situation in the settled districts.

#### **4.1 The Changing British Policies towards the Tribal Territory**

The British policy till their early engagement with the frontier tribes in 1870s was of protracted engagement in order to draw the indigenous tribes within their political orbit and to facilitate control over what was generally accepted as a strategically vital area for the British interests.<sup>11</sup>

Lord Curzon had written in his memorandum in June 1899 that whole tribal territory up to the Durand Line will gradually come under our control and it's my desire to bring it gradually without constant aid and presence of British troops.<sup>12</sup> Acting upon this policy, the British

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<sup>10</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *North-West Frontier Province: History and Politics*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2007), 74

<sup>11</sup> Tripodi, 'Political' Tribes and Masahibans", 867

<sup>12</sup> IORL, "Memorandum of the viceroy about the policy on the North- West Frontier", 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, IOR/L/PS/12/3265



authorities had adopted the policy of peaceful penetration and bringing the tribes under their control.

The modes of the policy were changed from the initial Close Border of 1880s to Forward Policy of 1890s whereas the Durand agreement was concluded in 1893. After the great revolt of 1897 throughout the tribal area, a policy of peaceful penetration was adopted by Lord Curzon that was to change into a gradual penetration or a modified forward policy of 1920s after the Anglo-Afghan war in 1919. The Viceroy in his memorandum of July 1939 writes that the policy we had adopted in 1922 has developed into an inevitable outcome of endeavoring to extend our influence over the tribes lying between the administered border and the Durand Line.<sup>13</sup> In fact, it was a new forward but gradual policy aimed at affective control of the tribes in the backdrop of the India Act of 1935. Sir George Cunningham writes about the frontier situation that the policy since the occupation of central Waziristan in 1923 has been successful and suggested further construction of roads for proper and easy mobilization of troops and control over the tribes.<sup>14</sup>

The Foreign Secretary in his speech in the assembly in 1924 had repeated that the control over whole of Waziristan is our objective.<sup>15</sup> In the fight between the British and the tribes, air bombing was started of selected villages where hostile *Lashkars* would assemble. The use of aeroplanes and bombardment destroying common houses and innocent people including women and children was criticized by the public in England.<sup>16</sup> A secret detailed letter signed by Lord Reading and five other political officers to the foreign and political department and Secretary of State for India dated 15<sup>th</sup> October 1925 while rejecting the publicity given to the theory of Lord Peel in England about indiscriminate use of air force against the Mehsud tribesmen including

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid;

<sup>14</sup> Indian Office, "Note on the North- West frontier Policy", October 1938, Mss Eur D670/13

<sup>15</sup> IORL, "Memorandum of the Viceroy about the policy on the North- West Frontier", 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, IOR/L/PS/12/3265

<sup>16</sup> IORL, "Secret letter no. 11 from the Foreign and Political department to the Secretary of state for India", 15<sup>th</sup> October 1925, L/PS/12/3260



women and children claims that proper warning for vacating the villages is given before bombing the selected areas.<sup>17</sup> The letter describes the maximum number of casualties in an ongoing operation of the area as 11 persons caused by 154 tons of bombs with 100,000 rounds of ammunition.<sup>18</sup> The punishment meted out to a single tribe in Waziristan shows that the level of destruction in Tirah, Bajaur and Mohmand was much higher both in human and material losses. Villages of specific tribes such as the Mehsuds and Wazirs in Waziristan, Afridis in Tirah and Mohmands in the Mohmand territory were bombarded heavily as part of collective punishment of the tribes.

The very stationing of troops in the area was irritating the tribes where foreigners were unknown to them and considered as enemies and a threat to their freedom. Like other tribal agencies, troops were stationed in Waziristan viz Wana, Razmak and Miranshah. Despite the aerial bombardment, sporadic attacks by the Mehsud, Wazir and Mohmand tribesmen were common on British convoys. However, the tribes were subdued at large by the massive use of air force as well as giving allowances to the loyal *maliks*. They were forced to enter into agreements with the government. The disturbances of 1930 and 1931 were partly out of frustration due to the gradual encroachment of the British and the atrocities committed against the common people in the settled districts added fuel to the fire.

Acting upon the policy of gradual penetration of 1922, the Governor ordered forward moves and construction of roads from the state of Dir to Tirah passing through Bajaur, Mohmand and Orakzai in 1935. Similar steps of constructing roads in North and South Waziristan were underway. This policy of constructing roads further alarmed the Pakhtun tribes as it was seen as a policy of encircling them and curtailing their independence. In Mohmand area, the Haji of

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<sup>17</sup> IORL, "Letter from Reading and others to the Foreign and Political Department, the Secretary of State, Simla", 15<sup>th</sup> October 1925, IOR/L/PS/12/3260

<sup>18</sup> Ibid;



Turangzai after leaving the socio- educational activities in the settled areas in 1915 had started armed resistance against the British. He not only resisted the British advancement in the Mohmand area but also tried to avenge the suppression of the Khudai Khidmatgars of the settled districts. Due to his resistance against the Forward policy of the British, the hostile tribes in Mohmand were bombarded in military operations of 1935. The military cost of the British was Rs. 42, 15,000 and 30, 56,000 in 1935 and 1936 respectively against the Mohmand tribe.<sup>19</sup> He continued his struggle against the *raj* until his death in 1937. In Waziristan, the Faqir of Ipi started his struggle in 1936 due to the incident of Islam Bibi, a Hindu convert girl who was married to a Pakhtun school teacher but the British authorities handed her against her will to her mother as it was claimed that the girl was a minor. According to the British Governor of the Frontier, Sir George Cunningham, the incident proved as a triggering point where the Faqir of Ipi rose in Waziristan in 1936 and successfully exploited the situation.<sup>20</sup>

#### **4.2 The Faqir of Ipi**

It is an established fact that religion has always played an important role in shaping and molding the lives and history of the Pakhtuns and this is more true in case of the frontier tribes. They had always responded to religious appeals by their leaders and played an instrumental role in mobilizing the tribes against the British. They were already looking the presence of foreign troops with disdain and did not lose any chance of attacking government installations. The colonial authorities were resisted as far as their economic conditions allowed them. Due to their economic dependence and socio- cultural ties with the people of the settled districts, the tribes were moved by events in India and the NWFP. The matter of Islam Bibi became the immediate

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<sup>19</sup> IORL, "Memorandum of the viceroy about the policy on the North- West Frontier, dated", 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, L/PS/12/3265

<sup>20</sup> IORL, "Summary of events in the NWFP: 1937- 1946", p. 1, Mss Eur D670/17



reason which gave rise to the emergence of a religious- nationalist leader, Haji Mirzali Khan also known as the Faqir of Ipi of Waziristan in 1936. He started collecting *Lashkars* of the Wazir, Dawar and Mehsud tribes and attacked British check posts and convoys in Waziristan. Unable to control, the government embarked on a more aggressive policy for subduing the hostile tribes.

After assuming the governorship of the province on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1937, George Cunningham's first step was ordering the bombing of Madda Khel Wazir tribe for giving protection to the killers of Lieutenant Beatty and two Khasadars and the Kazha village was bombed and destroyed on 13<sup>th</sup> March. He also recommended drastic action against the Mehsuds and Tori Khel Wazir tribes. Five thousand copies of notices about warning for expulsion of the Faqir were dropped from the air.<sup>21</sup> Upon receiving the message of the *Jirga* that they could not expel the Faqir, bombing the Mehsud and Wazir areas was started on 16<sup>th</sup> March causing destruction of the villages killing many people including women and children. This aggressive attitude further enraged the tribes in Waziristan and hundreds more started joining the Faqir's *Lashkar*. With every retaliatory attack of the Faqir, the government would bomb the nearby village. Only the Madda Khel tribe was bombed several times during 1937 and 1938. Instead of failing to compel the tribes for expulsion of the Faqir, his *Lashkar* grew in strength. Resultantly, the government brought 28 battalions or 40,000 troops to Waziristan. The British spent a huge amount of Rs. 1,58,11,000 in operations against the Faqir in the year 1937-38.<sup>22</sup>

Due to the growing attacks, the option of retreating from Waziristan was also discussed by the authorities. However, the governor rejected the suggestions about evacuation of central areas or important cantonment like Razmak in Waziristan. To him, withdrawal could cause conflagration in all the tribes of the frontier as was the case in 1919 after their retreat from Datta Khel area of

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<sup>21</sup> IORL, "Cunningham Diary 1937-1940", Mss Eur D670/3

<sup>22</sup> IORL, "Memorandum of the viceroy", 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, L/PS/12/3265



North Waziristan and Wana in South Waziristan. However, the bombing of villages as collective punishment and arresting tribal *maliks* compelled the Faqir and his followers to take refuge in caves in order to minimize destruction and killing of common people. Unable to attack the British in central areas of Waziristan, the *Lashkar* decided to take revenge of the bombing by sending groups and attacking the settled districts of Bannu and D.I. Khan destroying government properties, mining of roads, killing government officials and kidnapping men of Hindu minority in these two districts. According to Olaf Caroe who served the External Affairs Department as Foreign Secretary of the government for India in 1939 and became Governor of the Frontier in 1946, the raiding gangs descend from the caves dig in the hills near the Bannu district.<sup>23</sup> The attacks led to the already tense communal situation in Bannu and D.I. Khan and the kidnaping the Hindus were undertaken either for releasing the tribal elders or receiving ransom.

Events in the tribal areas particularly Waziristan received publicity throughout India.<sup>24</sup> The Indian Press was frequently publishing the increasing number of raids in the districts and killings of innocent lives and destroying government properties.<sup>25</sup> The Viceroy writes that, “due to the superiority of our troops and by the air, raids along with mining of roads and destruction of property represent the only form of offensive action open to the tribes”.<sup>26</sup> The numbers of raids from 1930 to 1935 were less and increased from 1935 to 1939 as is given in the table below.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> IOR, “O.K. Caroe’s Speech in the Legislative Assembly”, 11<sup>th</sup> March 1940, p. 1116, IOR/L/PS/12/3265

<sup>24</sup> Mohammad Yunus, “*Frontier Speaks*”, (Bombay: Hind Kitabs Ltd, 1947), 57

<sup>25</sup> IORL, “Extract from the Official Report of the Legislative Assembly Debates”, 11<sup>th</sup> March 1940, p. 1108, L/PS/12/3265

<sup>26</sup> IORL, “Memorandum of the Viceroy”, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, L/PS/12/3265

<sup>27</sup> Ibid;



Year	Raids in Bannu	Raids in D.I. Khan	Total number of Raids
1930-31	0	4	4
1932-33	1	2	3
1933-34	0	1	1
1934-35	0	6	6
1935-36	1	12	13
1936-37	11	2	13
1937-38	34	23	57
1938-39	45	20	65
1-4-39- 29-5-39	2	9	11

Source: India Office Record Library, “Memorandum of the Viceroy”, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, File No. L/PS/12/3265

The new forward policy in the tribal territory was criticized by nationalist leaders in the province and Delhi. In the NWFP, Dr. Khan Sahib suggested that the tribesmen be left alone and dealt with mutual goodwill and honesty. Jawaharlal Nehru travelled the province in 1938 and stated in a speech at Bannu that the whole British approach towards the tribal region was futile, worse and rooted in hostility. Similarly, Asif Ali in July, 1937 while writing in Delhi’s *National Call* asked the government to invite the Congress for taking over India’s tribal policy.<sup>28</sup> The policy was debated in the legislative assembly and criticized by many members. The Deputy leader of the Congress in the assembly, Asif Ali termed the British policy as simple and pure aggression. Asif Ali supported by Dr. Khan Sahib insisted that the Forward Policy of the government was foolish and irrational and proposed to leave the tribesmen alone. He went on to say that the military

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<sup>28</sup> Brandon Marsh, *Ramparts of Empire: British Imperialism and India’s Afghan Frontier 1918- 1948*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 217



operations in the tribal area have been necessitated by the fact that the Indian government considered the area as their own and trying to bring the tribesmen under control who never allowed themselves to be subdued by others.<sup>29</sup> Malvi Syed Murtaza, a Muslim member from Madras criticized the arguments of British nominated Legislative members and Punjab Hindu Mahasabah who were applauding the government forward policy in the tribal territory. Malvi Syed Murtaza instead supported the motion forwarded by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan criticizing the British forward policy. While narrating the situation in the tribal area, he stated:

“Its better to mind your own business than to meddle with the affairs of others. It is not advisable on the part of the Indian government to put up constructions on the lands belonging to others. Sir, the whole trouble has cropped up this way. There is no doubt that the Wazirs, Mehsuds and Afridis are the world’s first class fighters. They love their religion, honor and freedom more than their lives. They are leading very simple and happy life and do not like any kind of government interference. Now, the forward policy of the government is outcome of a desire to undermine their independent spirit. They were always independent and never under any government. They were neither under the Sikhs nor even under the Amir of Kabul... why has the government spent 400 crores of Indian money? Leave them alone and if they make any raid or inroad, they should be brought to book. The policy which has been resorted to by the government has proved disastrous. How much money is being spent every day even now? The government has not only increased its own troubles and difficulties but also those of the Wazirs. So, the forward policy can not but is condemned by all of us... The Congressites, the Muslim Leagues and I may say that even the members of the European group do not support this forward policy”.<sup>30</sup>

With increasing bombardment of the villages in Waziristan, the killings in the settled districts of Bannu and D.I. Khan also increased. Sardar Sant Singh of the Punjab while quoting the report of the *Times of India* said in the legislative assembly that:

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid; 214

<sup>30</sup> IORL, “Extract from the Official Report of the Legislative Assembly Debates”, 11<sup>th</sup> March 1940, p. 1110, L/PS/12/3265



“Since Waziristan was hopefully transferred from the military to the political control last April (1939) there have been 143 trans border raids up to the end of January last (1940). No less than 161 men, women and children were kidnaped, of whom, it is believed, the release of 134 was secured either by pressure or by ransom. A hundred and four people were killed during the same period, 41 being harmless civilians and the remainder personnel either of the regular troops or of the civilian defense forces. Thirty nine out of two hundred and fourteen wounded were also civilians. The release of the most respected and popular officer of the Indian Medical Service, Major Duggal was secured by after releasing 35 tribal *maliks* and paying large sum of ransom. Moreover, there have been no less than seventeen further major incidents this month (March 1940).”<sup>31</sup>

The Shabi Khel Mehsud villages were initially bombed on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1939 for pressurizing the tribes to set free Major Duggal and other captives.<sup>32</sup> The governor at the same time was afraid that the bombing would lead to further increase in raids. His calculation proved true and the Shabi Khels blown up two bridges near Marobi two days later on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1940 and threatened the British authorities to be ready for more attacks.<sup>33</sup> The Governor in his report on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1940 suggested that we should stop destructive bombing of the Shabi Khel Mehsuds that could improve the situation as well as the release of Major Duggal and two other Hindus. Upon negotiations with the Mehsud *maliks* on 8<sup>th</sup> January, the captives were released by the Mehsuds.<sup>34</sup> While the governor does not say anything about the release of tribal leaders as an exchange of prisoners, he rejected giving any ransom for the release of Major Duggal and two Hindus. Destructively bombing the villages, imposing air blockade where the tribes could not undertake any kind of trade in the settled districts or free movement, suspension of allowances to the Khasaddars, heavy fines in cash and rifles would further deteriorate the situation rather than solving the problem. Referring to the ongoing offences of the Mehsud tribe in district Bannu, the

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid; 1112

<sup>32</sup> Private Papers, “Cunningham’s Diary, 1937-1940”, Mss Eur D670/3

<sup>33</sup> Ibid;

<sup>34</sup> IORL, Governor’s Report No. 1, 9<sup>th</sup> January 1940, p. 3, Mss Eur D670/15



Governor, George Cunningham attributed it as a result of the destruction caused by the air action taken against the tribe and who had been evicted from their homes and looking for something to hit in return.<sup>35</sup> However, negotiations with the tribal *maliks*, stopping the bombing, lifting blockade and releasing the imprisoned tribal elders worked well in minimizing the scale of destruction both in the agency and the districts of Bannu and D.I. Khan.

### **4.3 The Afghan Factor**

The role of the Afghan government was crucial in directing the relationship between the frontier tribes and the British throughout the 1930s. Not only have the Pakhtun nationalists propagated the cause of Nadir Shah rather the frontier tribes played a decisive role in his victory in 1929 against the forces of Tajik King Bacha Saqao in Afghanistan. The active support of 12000 Mehsud and Wazir *Lashkar* of Waziristan secured the throne of Kabul for the Afghan King. However, after proclaiming the title of Shah and adopting pro-British attitude, he was considered as usurper by the pro Amanullah Pakhtun nationalists of the NWFP and frontier tribes. After his assassination in 1933, King Zahir Shah continued the policy adopted by his father. However, the Afghan rulers were disliked by the Pakhtun nationalists of the Frontier and tribes. The problem for the Afghan rulers in the tribal area was the propaganda of the Pakhtun nationalists who were considered as pro Hindu directing the loyalties of the tribes towards Delhi instead of Afghanistan. That is why the Afghan rulers were allowed to have influence in the tribal area by distributing allowance among them and the Khudai Khimatgars dealt with harshly by the authorities if found propagating the cause of unity and anti-British sentiments in the area. The Afghan rulers succeeded in keeping some kind of influence in the tribal territory for enabling them to forestall Congress dominance which they considered as the eastern part of Afghanistan

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<sup>35</sup> IORL, Governor's Report No.2, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1940, p.1, Mss Eur D670/15



subsequent to British withdrawal from India.<sup>36</sup> Despite having very limited access available to the Khudai Khidmatgars, many important frontier tribes were supporting their anti-British struggle as was the case during the civil disobedience movement. That is why the presence of Afridis hostile to the British in the Nangarhar province were considered as offensive by the Afghan government particularly their pro- Amanullah stand taken to be the focal point of the nationalist penetration in to the frontier.<sup>37</sup>

The Afridi tribe like the nationalists of the province was trying to bring back the deposed Afghan King Amanullah Khan to the throne of Kabul. O.K. Caroe in his speech during the Indian Legislative Assembly debate made it clear that the Indian government cannot allow the movements of the tribes on British side of the International border (Durand Line) directed at destabilizing our neighbors in Afghanistan.<sup>38</sup> The Viceroy writes that the maintenance of the present Afghan government is in our interests and we have also fulfilled our international obligations by exerting pressure on the Wazir tribe in Waziristan to abandon their incursion in Khost province of Afghanistan. Appreciating the role of the Afghan government, he stated that, “the pressure we have been able to bring upon the tribesmen in their homes, coupled with the friendly attitude of the Afghan government, has prevented any real major outbreak”.<sup>39</sup> While the Khudai Khidmatgars and the frontier tribes were waging a war against the British albeit with different strategies, the Afghan rulers refrained from creating any trouble for the British Indian government.

Apart from their dislike for the Khudai Khidmatgars, the Faqir of Ipi in Waziristan was also discouraged to enter into the Afghan territory. The Afghan ruling elite tried to convince him to

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<sup>36</sup> Tripodi, ‘Politicals’ Tribes and Masahibans”, 867

<sup>37</sup> Ibid; 872

<sup>38</sup> IORL, “O.K. Caroe’s Speech in the Legislative Assembly”, 11<sup>th</sup> March 1940, p. 1115, L/PS/12/3265

<sup>39</sup> IORL, “Memorandum of the Viceroy”, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, IOR/L/PS/12/3265



come to terms with the British. However, it is interesting to note that even three to five hundred tribesmen on the Afghan side of Durand Line were joining the Faqir's *Lashkar* regularly. George Cunningham in his correspondence with the Indian external affairs department in October 1938 while recommending air bombing of the Madda Khel tribes in Waziristan for sheltering the Faqir of Ipi accepts that the latter was gaining popularity not only among the tribes of Waziristan rather the Pakhtun tribes of Zadran, Tani, Khostwal and others who were joining and raising funds for the Faqir's *Lashkar* from the southern province across the Durand Line from Afghanistan.<sup>40</sup> Due to his influence over the tribes on both sides of the border, the Afghan government even requested the Faqir to pacify the Ghalji tribe in Afghanistan not to revolt against their own government. However, neither the Afghan rulers succeeded in convincing the British for inclusion of the tribal territory into Afghanistan nor the Khudai Khidmatgars succeeded in finding a broad based support among all the tribes of the Frontier. The Khudai Khidmatgars however, succeeded in winning the general elections of 1936-37 in the Frontier and the first ever Congress ministry was formed in the NWFP under the chief minister ship of Dr. Khan Sahib, the elder brother of Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

#### **4.4 Formation of the Congress Ministry in the NWFP under Dr. Khan Sahib: Steps Taken by the Congress Ministry**

Realizing the growing demands of the Indian nationalists for representative governments, the British had approved the India government Act in 1935. The Act was based on keeping in view the deliberations of the Round Table Conferences at London from 1930 to 1932 between different Indian political parties which had necessitated the involvement of Indians in a more responsible manner. General elections under the act were held two years later in February 1937.

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<sup>40</sup> IORL, "Disarmament of Waziristan and Notes of the Governor on the events in the North West Frontier", Mss Eur D670/13



The Indian nationalists won a clear victory in the elections and succeeded in making governments in eight out of eleven Indian provinces. Being a Muslim majority province with ninety three percent Muslims, the electorate of the NWFP voted in favor of the Congress.

The Congress won nineteen seats and twenty two independents with non from the Muslim League which was emerging as the Muslim representative body of the Muslims in India. Dr. Khan Sahib could not even campaign for his bye election to the Legislative Council from D.I. Khan District in September 1934 as he was banned from entering his province. However, due to his winning the elections in absentia, he was allowed to return to his province in May 1935. He toured the province, held meetings, and informed the people of the Congress program and after making a Parliamentary Board at Untmanzai (Charsadda) in November, 1935 asked for making District Boards throughout the province as the Provincial Congress Working Committee (FPCC) was still illegal.

Meanwhile, Sir George Cunningham replaced Sir Ralph Griffith as Governor of the province in March 1937 and was the Chief Executive of the province and controller of the tribal policy under the 1935 Indian Act. In the absence of Congress, the field was open for Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qayum, a pro- British retired civil servant to collect the Khans and with the full support and patronage of the Frontier Governor George Cunningham succeeded in forming the ministry on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1937. For the time being Congress refused to be part of the government. However, after receiving a conciliatory statement from the Viceroy in August 1937 that the governors would not use special powers for dictating the elected governments, the Congress decided to form ministries throughout India. Resultantly, Dr. Khan formed his ministry and remained in office for



two years and six weeks after passing a vote of no confidence by 27 to 22 votes with the help of Hindu- Sikh Nationalist party and Hazara Democratic Party on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1937.<sup>41</sup>

After assuming power, various steps were taken by the new ministry aimed at decolonizing the Pakhtun society and improving the financial conditions of the poor segments of society. The policy of Dr. Khan's ministry indirectly affected the political and financial dominance of the big Khans in the province and their position and status was threatened for the first time in history of the NWFP. Cunningham writes that "I realized that the Khans who had no good word to say started looking to Abdul Qaiyum Khan as their natural leader".<sup>42</sup> After his death in December 1937, the governor opined that it was very difficult for the Khans to find another leader for themselves like Abdul Qaiyum Khan. Most of them joined the Muslim League under Sardar Aurangzeb Khan as their party leader in the assembly.<sup>43</sup> However, Dr. Khan's ministry resigned in protest against the inclusion of India in to the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1939.<sup>44</sup> The ministry however, never lost the upper hand in the assembly until its resignation.

The Congress ministry under Dr. Khan Sahib took various steps and passed bills that were directly challenging the high status and position of the landed aristocracy. The major objective of Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry was to change the political balance in the province which the British had been using to govern the Pakhtun society. The British used to retain the status and privileged positions of the big Khans even after losing their social legitimacy in the society.<sup>45</sup> The very first step of the provincial ministry was abolishing the position of Honorary Magistrates, a selected group of non officials and who were mostly big Khans invested with judicial powers

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<sup>41</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2015), 60

<sup>42</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's Diary, 1937-1940", IOR Mss Eur D670/3

<sup>43</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, Karachi: (Oxford University Press, 1999), 61

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 88

<sup>45</sup> Alan Stephen Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, (North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2016) 143



which was a direct blow at the Khans who had opposed the Red Shirt's agitation in 1930-31.<sup>46</sup> Their number in the province was about three hundred and most of them were big Khans, *Jagirdars*, Khan Bahadars and title holders who were given judicial powers on behalf of the government.<sup>47</sup> The ministry thought of replacing the 7425 *Lambardars* who were collecting land revenue, undertaking police duties with government officials, appointed on hereditary basis from among the leading men of every village and considered anti Congress. It is noteworthy to mention that those *Lambardars* who had supported the Congress during the civil disobedience of 1930 were already removed by the British authorities. However, the Frontier Governor George Cunningham and few ministers strongly opposed the idea due to fear of disrupting revenue collection from the people. The governor in his report on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1939 writes that "I will put every obstacle in its way".<sup>48</sup>

The ministry suspended the British practice of nominating sons and other relatives of the loyal Khans to the governmental administrative jobs. The Nawab of Teri (Kohat) was deprived of collecting Rs. 12,000 per annum as cesses from the people in March 1938 by repealing the Teri Dues Regulations act of 1902. The bill also proposed to end his *haq taluqdari*, an assessment levied in recognition of the Nawab's proprietary rights to the Tehsil. However, the governor challenged the bill by stating that the ministers had exceeded their authority, but they threatened of resigning in case of non-certification from the former. A compromise was reached in July to eliminate the cesses, the real grievance of the local people and to leave the *haq taluqdari* untouched which was considered as the sole domain of the governor. The *Jgair* of Teri *tehsil* was given as a reward by the British to the Khwaja M. Khan, the grandfather of Nawab Baz M. Khan

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<sup>46</sup> IORL, "Summary of events in the NWFP: 1937- 1946", p. 3, Mss Eur D670/17

<sup>47</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 72

<sup>48</sup> IORL, "Governor's Report No. 17", 14<sup>th</sup> September 1939, p. 7, Mss Eur D670/15



for his services to the British *Raj* during the war of independence in 1857 and the Afghan wars.<sup>49</sup> The mover of the bill, M. Afzal Khan claimed that the Nawab had no evidence to support his claim over the ownership of Teri and collecting various taxes from the poor people. The Agricultural Produce Market Bill was passed in March 1938 aimed at protecting the small *Zamindars* and peasants from the accesses of the *Mahajans* (money lenders) who were acting as middle men and dominating the markets thereby depriving the peasants from their hard earned money.<sup>50</sup> The legislation aimed at relieving the small *Zamindars* and giving them marketing facilities in the face of strong opposition from the local Hindus and the Congress high command was the most constructive work of the Dr. Khan ministry.<sup>51</sup> Minority members of the assembly like Hukam Chand, Ajit Singh and Ishar Das criticized the bill which they considered as an attack on the rights of their communities as most of the *Mahajans* (money lenders) were from Hindu minority. The opposition leader and Muslim member Aurangzeb and Sadullah who was representative of the landlords also helped in passing the bill. Despite these differences among the Hindu and Muslim members in the assembly and the communal like situation in the province as a result of the raids from the tribal areas, the communal feelings of the religious minorities did not rise serious law and order situation. According to report of the governor to the central government in Delhi, the people of the Frontier both Hindus and Muslims did not welcome the Day of Deliverance announced by leader of the Muslim League, M.A. Jinnah on 22<sup>nd</sup> December in response to the Congress resignations from the ministries and that it only embittered communal feelings in the province.<sup>52</sup> On the contrary, leaders of the Hindus- Sikh nationalist party submitted a resolution in the Hindu Mahasabha conference proposing a committee to

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<sup>49</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 64

<sup>50</sup> Ibid; 63

<sup>51</sup> IORL, "Summary of events by the Governor in the NWFP 1937- 1946", p. 3, Mss Eur D670/17

<sup>52</sup> IORL, "Governor's Report No. 24", 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1939, p. 2, Mss Eur D670/15



enquire about the Pro Muslim and anti Hindu policy of the Congress ministry led by of Dr. Khan Sahib.

The steps taken by Dr. Khan's ministry were not without political motivation aimed at undermining the status and position of the big Khans in the Pakhtun society. Most of the people in the rural areas and beneficiaries of the bills were poor and affiliated with the anti-British struggle of the Congress and Khduai Khidmatgar movement. The affected were both the upper and landed class of the Hindus and Muslims alike. The bills passed were directly decolonizing the society and aimed at giving more socio- economic space to the common people thereby changing the old pattern of governance regulated through the *Khanite* or landed class. According to Cunningham, these measures contributed to the fairness and greater government efficiency.<sup>53</sup>

K.B. Sadullah Khan and eleven other big Khans met the governor on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1939 and charged the provincial ministers as vindictive. They complained him about the British officers who were not giving them proper respect and were left at the mercy of the Congress ministry. However, Governor Cunningham pointed to his own difficulties regarding their status and asked them to unite themselves and make a strong political party of their own.<sup>54</sup>

#### **4.5 Impact of the British Policy in the Tribal territory on the Settled Districts**

By the time, the Congress ministry was busy in legislation for improving the socio- economic and political condition of the downtrodden sections within the settled districts, the Faqir of Ipi had started serious attacks on British check posts and installations in Waziristan. Cunningham on the one hand was dealing with the Congress ministers for protecting the status and position of the loyal Khans and trying to contain the activities of the Faqir on the other. In his diary of 1937 to

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<sup>53</sup> IORL, "Cunningham to Linlithgow", 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1938, LP/72, No. 18, Letter D.O. GH- 89, Also quoted by Rittenberg, 144.

<sup>54</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's Diary 1937-1940", Mss Eur D670/3



1940, he writes about the new challenge of the Congress in the province and his frequent visits to each and every tehsil of the tribal agencies for observing the political situation on the ground. The governor was in regular and continuous contact with the political officers and military commanders in the tribal area and has noted his discussions and communication with them on daily basis. His approach towards the tribal area was a forward move in Waziristan which was central to the British formulation of the whole tribal policy and where the Faqir of Ipi had already started attacking the British installations in 1936. Hence, the governor and his officers were confronted with two different kinds of challenges viz a viz, the political problem of the Congress ministry in the province and the armed resistance of the Faqir in the tribal area. The immediate result of the government's forward policy was increase in the attacks of the tribes in the settled areas of the province. The tribes living in the settled districts and administrative borders sympathized with the people of the agencies. Many Wazirs in district Bannu constabulary and Khassadrs in the tribal agency deserted the British and joined the hostile *Lashkars* as a reaction to the aggressive policy of the authorities in Waziristan. Half a platoon of the Wazir tribe in Bannu and about forty Khasadars deserted the British in Waziristan in March 1937.<sup>55</sup> Land mining, cutting telephone wires, snipping, blowing bridges, killing British officials and kidnapping minorities for ransom became part of the struggle against the colonial authorities. While the Wazirs, the Mehsud and Bhattani tribes in the administered territory like Bannu, D.I. Khan, Tank and Jandola were busy in fighting a constitutional struggle against the British, the hostile tribes in the semi-autonomous region of Waziristan intensified their armed resistance. In a single incident near Shahur Tangi on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1937, a British convoy was held up that killed

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid;



many British soldiers including eight officers.<sup>56</sup> During a conference in Kohat where the commander in chief and the governor were present, the Tiarzah post was attacked by a *Lashkar* and engaged the British the whole day on 16<sup>th</sup> April and village was bombed next morning. A *Lashkar* of hundred Bhattani tribe attacked Tajori post on 19<sup>th</sup> April which was repulsed late in the evening.<sup>57</sup> Every bombing in the agency was avenged by attacking the British in the settled areas. Governor Cunningham in his meeting with the Viceroy regarding the Waziristan problem admitted on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1939 that the raids in Bannu and D.I. Khan were an answer to our bombing of Shabi Khel Mehsud and Khaisora Wazir and sending of 2 more columns in these areas.

The Pakhtuns in the settled districts were facilitating the raids of the tribal *Lashkars*. Resultantly, the Hindu minority in Bannu and D.I. Khan also came under the wrath of the tribesmen in the sense that they were kidnapped either for releasing the prisoners or taking ransom. The struggle against the government changed into a communal one. In D.I. Khan, communal riots erupted on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 1939 over the killing of a cow where about fifty shops of the Hindus were burnt down and the situation was brought under control only when the chief minister Dr. Khan Sahib accompanied by the finance minister, Bhunju Ram and minister for industries, Abbas Khan reached there. This phenomenon not only increased the law and order situation in the administrative areas rather gave rise to the communal situation in the districts. According to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Assistant Commissioner of D.I. Khan, Shaikh Mehabub Ali who had also been active against the Afghan Amir Amanullah Khan and after becoming Political agent of Malakand agency sabotaged Nehru's visit of the agency on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1946 played a key role

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<sup>56</sup> IORL, "Summary of events in the NWFP: 1937- 1946", p. 2, IOR Mss Eur D670/3 See also "Cunningham's Diary 1937-1940", Mss Eur D670/17

<sup>57</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's Diary 1937-1940", Mss Eur D670/3



in the violence against Hindus.<sup>58</sup> The minorities complained that the Congress ministry under Dr. Khan Khan did not try to protect them from the raids by not taking sufficient strong measures against those Muslims who were believed to facilitate the tribesmen.<sup>59</sup> It is noteworthy to mention that the Hindus who had permanently settled in Waziristan were never hurt and enjoyed proper respect and freedom of practicing their religion well after the creation of Pakistan. Hundreds of Hindu families were residing in Waziristan and other tribal agencies until the start of the war on terror in Afghanistan in 2001 and spread of religious militancy in the tribal area compelled them to shift to settled areas of the province. The British forward policy after 1935 and the rise of the Faqir as a leader against imperialism led to the communal situation where the later was left with no option but to retaliate the bombardment of common villages by attacking the British installations in the districts along with kidnapping the minorities.

Looking at the increase in attacks of the Pakhtun tribesmen against the British, the disarmament of the tribes was floated and recommended in principle.<sup>60</sup> However, the intense democratic nature of the tribes, the expected position and attitude of the Afghan government and the fear of international political players were considered and the suggestion as too big an undertaking and impracticable.<sup>61</sup> Instead of engaging the popular and elected leaders in the province for reaching an amicable solution with the Faqir, the British authorities tried to keep the tribes away from the settled areas. The Viceroy suggested that the Governor should exercise his full control over the tribal area and writes that:

“If the relations between the two communities (Hindus and Muslims) become more strained, this may enforce on us still greater caution in handling the frontier issue. It is probable that the new government of

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<sup>58</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan, *Zama Zwand au Jaddo Jehad*, Pashto, (Peshawar, nd), 567

<sup>59</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 162

<sup>60</sup> IORL, “Summary of Viceroy's Memorandum about General Policy on the North- West Frontier”, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, L/PS/12/3265

<sup>61</sup> Ibid;



the North- West Frontier Province (Congress government) will take an increasing interest in handling the tribal affairs and the Governor, while resisting attempts to interfere, should lay stress on the specific and civilizing objects of our policy and the vital importance of control of the settled districts so as to enable raiding to be dealt with effectively. Arrangements for exchange of intelligence and cooperation between the officers in the tribal areas and in the settled districts should be examined to see that they are adequate. The Viceroy is not inclined to lay stress on the fact that the tribal belt is a part of British India, as it might encourage pressure for its absorption in the province".<sup>62</sup>

The British policy towards the tribes was very clear. The main objective was keeping the area as a buffer between India and Afghanistan for the greater defense of the empire. On the other hand, the policy was leading towards an increase communal situation. Dr. Khan Sahib and his ministers were powerless to act against those elements who were attacking the settled districts or to ask the political agents for their negligence since the agencies and its political officers were working directly under the command of the governor. The Premier and the Congress ministers tried several times for persuading the governor to be allowed for having influence in the political affairs of the tribes since the raids were discrediting the Congress ministry. The leader of the Congress, Gandhi on his tour to the province in October 1938 asked the Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry to quit if they were not capable of dealing with the political situation district Bannu and D.I. Khan for restoring law and order and protecting the Hindu minorities.<sup>63</sup> Even, the elected representatives in the government of Dr. Khan Sahib were splitting apart in fall 1938 and spring 1939 on the issue of increasing raids from the tribal area. However, Dr. Khan Sahib averted these attempts by reasserting discipline among the Congress and non Congress members.<sup>64</sup> He undertook a trip to Bannu in October 1937 about putting an end to the raids as help was promised by Nawab Zafar Khan and several Khans. The trip was a success and the governor was informed

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid;

<sup>63</sup> Parshotam. Mehra, *The North West Frontier Drama: 1945- 1947*, (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 1998), 36

<sup>64</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity*, 142



by the British officials at Bannu that the conditions were improving greatly after Dr. Khan's visit to the district.<sup>65</sup> During the visit of Dr. Khan's Bannu visit, Abdul Ghaffar Khan was also in Bannu at the time and the Superintendent of Police, a British officer suggested to him to accompany the police to a village and asking the villagers to be supportive in maintaining law and order. Abdul Ghaffar Khan agreed and went to the village along with the British police officer and the situation improved considerably.<sup>66</sup> However, the governor did not like the chief minister interfering in the tribal affairs as instructed by the central government. At the same time, Dr. Khan Sahib was unhappy with mismanagement of Bannu raids by the British officials at Bannu and complained to the governor that the deputy commissioners like Russel and Smith were active in anti Congress political propaganda.<sup>67</sup> Most of the minorities started looking to the British as their saviors particularly in district Bannu and D.I. Khan. This is evident from the fact that the governor in his report while on official tour to D.I. Khan writes in February 1940 that the Hindu Association has asked its followers to stay from the activities of the local Congress and Khudai Khidmatgars against the British War efforts.<sup>68</sup> Resultantly, the local Pakhtuns and the Khudai Khidmatgars including Abdul Ghaffar Khan were seen by the Hindus after the riots as accomplices of the armed groups from Waziristan. Irony of the British authorities was that instead of discussing the tribal problem with the elected representatives or the popular leaders like Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the governor unsuccessfully engaged the Wali of Swat or his minister, the ruler of a princely state for taming the Faqir of Ipi and his followers for reaching an agreement with the tribes.

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<sup>65</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's Diary, 1937-1940", Mss Eur D670/3

<sup>66</sup> IORL, "Summary of events in the NWFP 1937- 1946", 4, Mss Eur D670/17

<sup>67</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's Diary, 1937-1940", Mss Eur D670/3

<sup>68</sup> IORL, "Governor's Report No. 3", 10<sup>th</sup> February, 1940, p.5, Mss Eur D670/15



The popular leaders were discouraged from any kind of direct contact with the tribes. The provincial representatives of Hindus like Bhunju Ram and others demanded from George Cunningham to enquire about the engineering of raids in Bannu. However, he replied that it was basically the result of British policy in Waziristan whose investigation was not business of the provincial government.<sup>69</sup> The provincial ministers including Qazi Attaullah and Abbas Khan also demanded in a meeting of the council in Nathiagali on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1938 that an independent enquiry committee should be formed to enquire about the incidents of raids. The governor however, did not agree to their demand and instead suggested an official and in camera investigation be made with no non official member. Both official and non official enquiries pointed fingers to the hostility of British officers towards the Congress ministry.<sup>70</sup> After undertaking an official report, Dr. Khan Sahib debated the question of publishing report which contains serious strictures Major Laughton, who was the Deputy Commissioner of Bannu at the time of the raids and had left on leaves during the process of the enquiry.<sup>71</sup> The governor agreed to its publication on the condition of explaining that Major Laughton's views had not been included in the report about the Bannu raids due to his absence during process of the enquiry.<sup>72</sup> The governor was not ready to give the Frontier Constabulary (FC) under the control of the provincial government neither have it an effective control over the police. While the power and authority of administering the tribes rested with the governor and his political officers, the responsibility of maintaining law and order in the districts was the job of the provincial government.

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<sup>69</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's Diary 1937-1940", Mss Eur D670/3

<sup>70</sup> Parshotam. *The North West Frontier Drama*, 36

<sup>71</sup> IORL, "Governor's Report No. 15", 9<sup>th</sup> August 1939, p.2, Mss Eur D670/15

<sup>72</sup> Ibid;



Abdul Ghaffar Khan personally met the governor on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1939 upon mediation of Miss Slade, a British lady working for the welfare of the Pakhtuns and discussed the situation in the Frontier, the tribal territory, the poor system of British governance in the area, need for unity of the Pakhtuns and tackling their problem as one. However, due to his anti Imperialist struggle and demand for unity of the Pakhtuns, he was not allowed to visit the tribal area. Abdul Ghaffar Khan according to the governor asked the later to allow the former to negotiate with the tribes on the side of the government as they were his people and understand them well. He was unfortunately not granted permission to visit the tribal territory and was told that the tribesmen did not like Congress and Gandhi.<sup>73</sup> In such circumstances, the British were the ultimate manipulators of tribal affairs in the interests of their Indian empire. In fact, the governor brought to the notice of the Viceroy that few British military officers were involved in politics and anti-Congress propaganda and that we should brought the situation in Waziristan to normality.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, the British bureaucrats created hurdles in the way of the Congress ministry as they did not wish to see themselves discredited in the eyes of the people.<sup>75</sup>

The Shami Pir (Syrian saint) incident in Waziristan shows that being true to their religion, the religious sentiments of the tribes were exploited by using religion. In June 1938, a mysterious character in the shape of Shami (Syrian) Pir, Muhammad Sahdi appeared in Waziristan among the strong Mehsud tribe and thousands of tribesmen took oath of allegiance to him. According to the governor, the Pir was actually settling blood feuds among the tribes and his presence has been on the side of peace on British side of Durand Line.<sup>76</sup> The Pir gathered a *Lashkar* of Mehsud tribe against the incumbent Afghan King Zahir Shah and in favour of the deposed King

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<sup>73</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's Diary 1937-1940", IOR Mss Eur D670/3

<sup>74</sup> Ibid;

<sup>75</sup> Farhad Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement in the N.W.F.P: Its Nature and Direction*, (np, nd), 210

<sup>76</sup> IORL, "Cunningham Diary (1937-1940)", IOR Mss Eur D670/3



Amanullah. However, the Afghan government complained to the British authorities about the activities of the Pir in Waziristan and alleged the British officers for creating the problem. However, the British resident in Waziristan, Bernes struck a deal with the Pir and dispersed the *Lashkar* which was about to leave for Afghanistan on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 1938 from Kaniguram, Ladha and Shawal.

Under the deal, a cheque of 25000 pounds was given by the Governor Cunningham on 30<sup>th</sup> June and the Pir was flown to Delhi and then sent back to Syria through imperial airways from Karachi on 4<sup>th</sup> July.<sup>77</sup> Blackmailing the Afghan Amir politically and isolating the Faqir of Ipi militarily in Waziristan by diverting large number of Mehsuds seems to be his objectives which were accomplished. According to Governor Cunningham, apart from thousands of pro British Mehsud, many *mullahs* supported the rhetoric of the Shami Pir against the Afghan government. The British minister at Kabul, Fraser- Tytler had requested the Afghan officials to help in either killing the Faqir of Ipi or bringing him to terms with the British. However, the Afghan government was unable to accept or accomplish either of the two options. Otherwise, they tried to convince the Faqir for coming to terms with the British which he flatly rejected. The Viceroy in a memorandum writes that it was our successful policy that we were able to exert pressure on the Mehsud tribe at the time.<sup>78</sup> He further says that, “we should establish our selves firmly in the tribal territory particularly in Waziristan where we could calculate to make it either impossible for the Afghan government to stand aloof or if did stand aloof, to make the survival of the

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<sup>77</sup> IORL, Mss Eur D670/33, Photographs of Shami Pir, his savant and the cheque given by Cunningham in June 1938 are kept in the file. The pictures of the Shami Pir look different with a beard in Waziristan and after his agreement with the government. However, he does not have beard in his passport picture. After the agreement with the government, the pir is a clean shaven energetic man wearing a Western suite and cigarette in his hand sitting in a Sofa in Karachi. The cheque is drawn from Imperial Bank of India with amount 25000 pounds and Indian Rupees 3,37, 000. Its not known who brought the Pir to Waziristan.

<sup>78</sup> IORL, “Memorandum of the Viceroy”, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1939, L/PS/12/3265



present dynasty doubtful to a degree”.<sup>79</sup> This clearly shows that the British policy was to keep the Afghan government dependent and not to remain neutral in case of British dealings with the tribes or other foreign players trying to exploit the tribes by helping them against the British. However, the British did not like to bring down the Afghan monarchy as it could further jeopardize their interests in the region.

Resultantly, the struggle of the Faqir of Ipi in Waziristan could not win over the British for leaving the occupation of Waziristan due to the British propaganda, pro British approach of the Afghan rulers in Afghanistan and the constitutional struggle of the Khudai Khidmatgars in the NWFP. The British authorities bombed the tribes heavily in response to their resistance against the *Raj* in the tribal area on the one hand and started a planned propaganda against all those who were against the British *Raj* through the British paid *mullahs*. The governor in his diary gives a detailed account of how he organized the religious propaganda and mentions the *mullahs* and money paid to each of them for giving *Fatwas* (religious verdict) in favor of the British who were believers and against the infidel Bolsheviks at the start of the Second World War. The policy of playing a religious card, its social and political impact upon the tribal areas in particular would be discussed in the next chapter.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid.



## Chapter Five

### War Years: (1939-1945)

The chief object of Ghaffar Khan is genuinely the social and economic improvement of the Pathan. He is not bitter against individual British officers, though he dislikes our system of government.<sup>1</sup> (George Cunningham)

When the British Indian authorities realized that they were moving towards waging the Second World War that ultimately began in September 1939, the biggest challenge for them in India was securing the North-West Frontier of India. It was assumed by the British policy makers that the Russians and Germans would attack India from the northern border with Afghanistan where they were already at war with the hostile Pakhtun tribes. The British political officer and envoy to Kabul, Fraser- Tytler suggested the British and Indian government to fully support the ruling Afghan regime as according to him, the present rulers of Afghanistan were anti-Soviet unlike the previous deposed King Amanullah Khan. The Frontier authorities were asked to debate and formulate a policy for keeping the Frontier and its tribal areas quiet during the war. The result of the discussions between the British governor and the political and military officers was that the best policy would be an appeal to political Islam and propaganda through the local *mullahs* for having a common cause with the British who were the believers in God as compare to Godless Soviets. The political and worldly affairs were given to the Khans and *jagirdars* while the religious propaganda against the Axis Powers was assigned to the *Mullahs* who successfully carried out the foreign agenda as their own and service to Islam.<sup>2</sup> After German's attack on

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<sup>1</sup> India Office Record Library, "Cunningham's Diary 1937-1940", D670/3

<sup>2</sup> Khan Abdul Wali Khan. *The Struggle and the Aftermath*, Vol. 1, (Peshawar: Bacha Khan Trust Research Center, 2011), 198



Soviet Russia in 1941, the propaganda was diverted against the Germans, Italians, the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier. The Governor writes in his diary that Iskandar Mirza, who had remained an Assistant Commissioner of Nowshera and Bannu during the early 1930s was the senior-most Muslim Civil Servant in the ministry of defense before Partition and later became President of Pakistan, came to Nathiagali on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1939 to discuss Muslim propaganda on the Frontier and the former suggested that if the war breaks out, the best option was to get *mullahs* for issuing *fatwas* and buying one or two newspapers for publishing the right stuff for publicity.<sup>3</sup>

On the all India level, the political condition deteriorated between the Indian National Congress and the British on the one hand and also the former came into direct clash with the All India Muslim League on the other as a result of the differences over India's inclusion into the war. Unlike the First World War where the British had waited until 1915 for curtailing civil liberties of the Indians, the Second World War led the Congress to resign from the government in response to the Indian inclusion in the war without consulting the Indian politicians.<sup>4</sup> The resignations of the Congress ministries in the provinces and particularly Dr. Khan's ministry in the NWFP proved a blessing in disguise for the British and the Governor took full control of the Frontier province though the tribal area was already under the control of the Governor who would be in direct communication with the central government in Delhi. The Frontier and its tribal area remained under Governor rule and the British authorities together with the active support of Khans and *mullahs* propagated successfully against the Russians, Germans and also the Pakhtun nationalists who were preaching against the recruiting of locals for the British War. Even, Badshah Gul, the son of Haji of Turangzai was propagating against the Khudai

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<sup>3</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's Diary 1937-1940", Mss Eur D670/3

<sup>4</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2015), 87



Khidmatgars on the instigation of the British and the Afghan rulers. Abdul Ghaffar Khan not only travelled throughout the province for preaching against the war rather sent different delegations to the tribal areas for the unification of the Pakhtuns and to stay away from the war which would prove destructive for the local people.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile, the Muslim League which was becoming a representative body of the Indian Muslims decided to support the British in their war against the Germans on the condition that the later would not make any decision without taking the former into confidence. Political differences of the Muslim League were directed against the Hindu dominated Congress rather than the British. While the League was previously unknown to the people of the Frontier, after the passing of the Lahore Resolution on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1940, the big Khans and *Mullahs* were not only spreading religious propaganda in support of the war but also spearheading the movement for Pakistan in the Frontier. Resultantly, a Muslim League ministry was installed in May 1943 consisted of big Khans who had lost their authority during Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry.<sup>6</sup> The British policy of using the card of political Islam together with the *fatwas* issued by the *Mullahs* and the movement for Pakistan led by the big Khans worked well in keeping the area quiet albeit with a heavy financial cost. At the end of the war in favour of the allied forces in 1945, the new British government in London announced that general elections would be held in India in 1946 and all the Congress leaders who were arrested in August 1942 after passing anti war and Quit India Resolutions were released in June 1945.<sup>7</sup> While, the Muslim League emerged as a representative body of the Indian Muslims in India during the war period, the majority of the

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<sup>5</sup> For details see Abdul Ghaffar Khan, *Zama Zhwand au Jaddo Jihad*, (Pashto), (Peshawar, 1985), 521-528. See also Fazal ur Rahim Saqi, *Khudai Khidmatgar*, (Pashto), (Peshawar: Bacha Khan Research Centre, 2012), Saqi was himself a prominent Khudai Khidmatgars who spent more than two and half years in Tirah, Mohmand and Bajaur tribal region for preaching the message of Khudai Khidmatgar movement and has written books about his visits and activities to the tribal agencies.

<sup>6</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, 115

<sup>7</sup> Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, (New Delhi: Orient Longman Limited, 1959), 107-110



electorates in the Frontier would still vote in support of the Khudai Khidmatgars. However, unlike, the elections of 1937, the Muslim League playing the religious card with the support of the British did succeed in gaining seats in the Frontier.

### **5.1 Inclusion of India into the Second World War and Response of the Congress and Khudai Khidmatgars**

The Second World War started on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939 and the Viceroy of India, Lord Linlithgow without consulting the Indian leaders dragged India into conflict with the Axis Powers. The Congress being the largest and ruling political party challenged the British decision of pushing India into a foreign war without their approval.<sup>8</sup> The Working Committee decided to resign and quit eight ministries as a protest. However, the Viceroy proposed and offered on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1940 that the Viceroy's advisory council will be expanded with more representation to the Indians. Apart from it, an Indian representative body at the end of the war would be constituted for enactment of a new constitution for India. Moreover, the rights of minorities would be safeguarded and that power would not be transferred to any party whose authority is challenged by powerful elements of the Indian national life. Besides, the Viceroy stated that no constitutional advancement could be made so far as the Congress and Muslim League had not reached a permanent settlement to their political disputes. It is noteworthy to mention that the League which claimed to be representative body of all the Indian Muslims had by this time passed the "Lahore Resolution" on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1940 demanding a separate homeland for the Indian Muslims in the shape of Pakistan. The offer was rejected by both the Congress and the Muslim League on different grounds. The Congress claimed that the offer did not assure their demand of independence and resigned from the government offices.

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<sup>8</sup> Eknath Easwaran, *A Man to Match His Mountains: Badshah Khan, Non Violent Soldier of Islam*, (California, Nilgiri Press 1984), 165 See also Khan, Abdul Ghaffar. "Zama Zwand au Jaddo Jihad (Peshawar, nd), 508



Following the decision of the Congress Working Committee, the Frontier Congress had also resigned on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1939. According to report of the Governor on 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1939, Dr. Khan Sahib would like the Frontier Congress ministry to be immune from resignation and only Abdul Ghaffar Khan could make it happen. However, Abdul Ghaffar Khan failed to attend the events of Congress passing resolutions probably he was in favor of resigning from ministries whereas his elder brother was in support of remaining office in the Frontier Province at least after having political assurances from the British government.<sup>9</sup> To Abdul Ghaffar Khan writes the Governor, the Congress ministries had not raised the status of the party in the eyes of the masses partly due to restrictions on their powers and partly due to their own differences.<sup>10</sup> Dr. Khan Sahib however, could not resist the decision of the Central Congress Working Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> November by passing a resolution by majority votes.<sup>11</sup>

Opinions within the Congress Working Committee were divided over the war and non-violence. The Congress however offered support during the war on the condition of giving freedom at the end of the war. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgars not only criticized but resigned from the Congress Working Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> July 1940 due to latter's conditional support to the British war after passing Wardha and Delhi resolutions since they were against any kind of war. The governor in his report on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1940 writes:

“that since the division among the Congress leaders over the war, Abdul Ghaffar Khan has been trying to detach his volunteers from the Congress organization as he consider that the days of the Congress were numbered due to abandoning of non violence. Abdul Ghaffar Khan has non violence on his brain and is trying to organize his organization as distinct from the Congress based on Islamic principles rather than Ahimsa”.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> IORL, “Governor Report No.20”, 25<sup>th</sup> October 1939, p. 2, D670/15

<sup>10</sup> IORL, “Governor Report No.21”, 12<sup>th</sup> November 1939, p. 1, D670/15

<sup>11</sup> Farhad Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement in the N.W.F.P: Its Nature and Direction*, (np, nd), 139

<sup>12</sup> IORL, “Governor Report No. 15”, 9<sup>th</sup> August 1940, p. 3, D670/15



Similarly, Gandhi appreciated the commitment of Abdul Ghaffar Khan to non violence in the following words since he himself was against the decision of the Congress working committee members.

“In the storm that shook most of the members of the Congress working committee’, Abdul Ghaffar Khan stood firm like a rock. Being so clear about his own faith and that of the Khudai Khidmatgars, there was for him no escape from resignation of his membership of the Congress Working Committee. His continuing on it would have been anomalous and might have meant an end of his Life’s work. He could not ask his people to join as recruits in the army and at the same time forget the law of tribal retaliation and revenge and that there was no difference between it and their blood feuds. To Ghaffar Khan, the matter of non violence was not of intellectual conviction but of the intuitive faith”.<sup>13</sup>

It was only when the Congress under the leadership of Gandhi started civil disobedience movement that Abdul Ghaffar Khan took back his resignation. Abdul Ghaffar Khan argued that we have been condemning wars and their destruction throughout our lives. It is now the time to prove our sincerity to resist all attempts against dragging us into war.<sup>14</sup> He was authorized by the Congress high command to guide and direct the movement in the Frontier and after undertaking a tour of the province and organizing different camps at Sardaryab, Utmanzai, Sherpao and district Bannu where volunteers and workers were being trained for *satyaghara* or non violence. The main purpose of the movement was raising anti war voices and violating the wartime laws and ordinances of the government. However, unlike, civil disobedience of 1930, Cunningham

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<sup>13</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2015), 124. See also Tendulkar, D.G. *Abdul Ghaffar Khan: Faith is a Battle*, (New Delhi: Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1967), 328

<sup>14</sup> Shah, Sayed Wiqar Ali. *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, 123



treated the agitators leniently due to the fear of violent reaction from the tribal territory which the government did not wish to occur at any cost.<sup>15</sup>

The movement was in the form of violating the wartime laws and government ordinances in the shape of organizing various training camps in the province including district Bannu and D.I. Khan. The speeches delivered by Abdul Ghaffar Khan during his tour of the province were aimed at organizing the Khudai Khidmatgars, emphasizing the theory of non-violence and with no direct call for non-cooperation in the prosecution of the war.<sup>16</sup> As a result of the lenient approach of the authorities the movement did not get popular support and the people were not much concerned with a distant war. The lenient approach of George Cunningham in the Frontier was criticized by the central government as it was creating embracement for other provincial governments.<sup>17</sup> Due to the low intensity of the movement in India and the NWFP, the Congress leaders like Nehru and Azad were released in India in December 1941 and the Khudai Khidmatgars had also resumed the social uplift and organizing the people in the rural areas against the war. However, the governor and provincial authorities were satisfied that the only district where the civil disobedience of Gandhi and Ghaffar Khan might attract considerable support was district Bannu. Apart from cool response of the government to the movement, the lack of interest among the people for a distant war, the slogan of “Islam in danger” planned by the British at the start of the war in order to show that the interests of Muslims and the British were identical for keeping the Frontier quite had started to succeed. According to the governor, the real thing that

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<sup>15</sup> IORL, “Governor Report No. 17”, 7<sup>th</sup> September 1940, D670/15

<sup>16</sup> IORL, “Governor’s Report No.21”, 12<sup>th</sup> November 1939, p. 1, D670/15

<sup>17</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, 128



matters in the NWFP is the attitude of our people we want them to adopt towards the present situation or as it may develop in the future.<sup>18</sup>

## 5.2 Religious Propaganda of the British

The Frontier was the most important strategic area for the defense of British India; the British policy makers could not formulate any other policy other than starting a religious propaganda against the Russians and Germans in the Frontier and the semi autonomous tribal areas. George Cunningham writes that, “when war appeared in August 1939, the Acting Governor, Sir Aurthur Parsons who was a military men of colonel rank decided that the best possible propaganda we can do in the Frontier is a religious propaganda through *Ulema* and religious organizations against the Bolsheviks”. George Cunningham in his diaries admits distributing money among various religious leaders for giving *fatwas* justifying the British rule in the Frontier over the Russian and German threat to the Pakhtun areas. Khan Bahadur Kuli Khan, the Indian Civil Servant was requested by Sir Arthur Parsons who started it first in August 1939.<sup>19</sup> Kuli Khan used his influence and succeeded in arranging secret meetings and bringing the *mullahs* in the tribal area with the help of the religious organization, Dar ul Uloom-i- Sarhad in Peshawar.<sup>20</sup> The line Kuli Khan took from the beginning was that he was working for the good of Islam and against the arch enemy of Islam- the Bolsheviks and he also represented the Germans as the collabourators of the Russians and hence enemy of Islam.<sup>21</sup> Many of the *mullahs* were paid for their anti Bolshevik preaching through one *Mullah* Marwat who was the first Kuli Khan had met for the purpose. Cunningham himself worked through the political agents and deputy

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<sup>18</sup> IORL, “Cunningham's correspondence with external affairs department, Propaganda through Mullahs, 1939-46”, 2, D670/19

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Alan Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, (North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2016), 172

<sup>20</sup> IORL, “Cunningham's correspondence”, p. 1, D670/19

<sup>21</sup> Ibid;



commissioners who employed influential and private citizens for carrying out the propaganda.<sup>22</sup> The British Indian rulers feared the role of international players in Afghanistan particularly Russians and Germans who were already looking for an opportunity and taking advantage of the situation in the tribal areas. Moreover, the authorities could not underestimate the threat from the tribal agencies that were estimated to have 1.5 million populations with 400,000 fighting men in total.<sup>23</sup> The major concern of the British in the Frontier at the start of the war however, was to keep the tribal areas quiet and away from foreign players as they were already at war with the British. The Governor along with his political officers in the tribal area succeeded in molding the affairs of the North- West Frontier in the British geo- political interests through a broad based network of religious propaganda as to frame the mind of the people to assist the British forces in case of an attack the enemy.<sup>24</sup> Apart from distributing money among the *mullahs* for issuing pro-British *Fatwas*, the Governor himself used to visit every tribal agency and holding large *jirgas* with the pro-British *maliks* to convince them for supporting cause of the British against the Russians and he honestly writes about distributing money to the *mullahs* in his communication with the external affairs department. K.B. Ghulam Haider Khan of Sherpao was given 600 rupees to work on 10 *mullahs* of Razar, Tarnab, Kot, tangi, Umarzai and Utmanzai of Charsadda and to give them 20 to 30 rupees per month to everyone after asking them about their useful propaganda (see appendix 4). Likewise, Iskandar Mirza who became president of Pakistan after 1947 provided names of the *mullahs* in Peshawar, Hazarat Ali, the Wazir-i-Azam of Swat was given the task of selecting and paying *mullahs* from Swat and Buner, the political agent of Malakand for Bajaur area, Deputy Commissioner, Muhammad Aslam for D.I. Khan, Cox for

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<sup>22</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 172

<sup>23</sup> Christian Tripodi, 'Politicals' Tribes and Masahibans: The Indian Political Service and the Anglo- Afghan Relations 1929-1939, *The International History Review*, Vol. 34, No. 4, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, (December 2012), 867, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2012.690203> For details see also D 970/20, IORL

<sup>24</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's correspondence with external affairs department", p. 3, D670/19



Bannu, Shaikh Mehboob Ali for Kohat and Bacon for Afridis and each was given 1000 rupees for the distributing it among *mullahs* 15 rupees each person per month.<sup>25</sup> List of the names of various *mullahs* who were hired for propaganda is given in Governor's Diary (see appendix 5). In addition to the propaganda through the *mullahs*, the governor suggested to the central government that there were widespread feelings of missing a very valuable means of propaganda by neglecting air broadcasting and that a carefully edited news program should be started once a day in the vernacular.<sup>26</sup> Afterwards, the press in the province was heavily subsidized for disseminating right sort of propaganda against the enemies of Briton and Islam.<sup>27</sup> Four local and two Lahore based newspapers were subsidized and regularly produced articles against the Bolsheviks and the Germans.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, a lot of anti Axis propaganda was done through the Pashto '*Nan Parun*' (Today and Yesterday) and Persian magazine *Taj Mahal* from Delhi was being distributed. Most of the *mullahs* who had consistently been anti British begin to write against the Russians and Germans in the press.<sup>29</sup> The clerics started attacking the Russians in their sermons, speeches and writings who were already disliked in the tribal areas for atheism and treatment with the Central Asian Muslims (see appendix 6). The newspapers and pamphlets written by the *mullahs* like Bhutan *Mullah*, the Akhunzada of Khanki Bazar, *Mullah* of Karbogha and others were widely circulated and the editors were instructed to send its copies to useful friends in Afghanistan.<sup>30</sup> The editors were also given addresses of 200 tribal *maliks* of the tribal areas and asked to regularly send them issues of their newspapers. Cunningham writes that, "more and more people were saying that if the beast Axis conquered them, the independence of

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid; 6-7

<sup>26</sup> IORL, "Governor Report No. 17", 14<sup>th</sup> September 1939, p. 5, D670/15

<sup>27</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 172

<sup>28</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's correspondence", p. 3, D670/19

<sup>29</sup> Ibid; 1

<sup>30</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's correspondence", p.5, D670/19



the Pakhtuns will be lost and the call for prayers would cease. All these things had we put in their mouths”.<sup>31</sup>

Meanwhile, the Germans surprisingly attacked Russia with whom the later had already reached an agreement. While the British were happy over this development since the Russians became on the side of the Allied Forces and threat to India was no more from the North, the propaganda was redirected against the Germans and Italians. Cunningham writes that “the *mullahs* from the tribal area have been asking me through Kuli Khan that what sort of propaganda they should do now whereas they had been preaching anti- Bolshevism and cruelties of the Russians in Central Asia against the Muslims of Bukhara”.<sup>32</sup> Cunningham although felt puzzled by this question of the *mullahs*. However, the statement of the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s speech stuck the right note by stating that we should cooperate with Russian for the common purpose of destroying Germany and Cunningham used the Pashto proverb that “at the time of need you can call a Hindu bunya as your uncle”.<sup>33</sup> George Cunningham instructed Kuli Khan to moderate the anti Bolshevik propaganda and to concentrate more on propaganda against the Germans and the Italians.<sup>34</sup> Henceforth, the Germans and Italians were considered as no more *Ihl-e- Kitab* (people of the book) and the Japanese were condemned as idol worshippers.<sup>35</sup> Informers reported the governor on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1941 that 17 speeches were delivered in district Peshawar where Islamic preaching was mixed with pro-British and strong stuff against the Japanese. During his tour to Kurrum Agency, writes George Cunningham that one of the elders from the *Jirga* of Turi tribe asked him whether it was true that the British were helping their old enemy, the Russians. Cunningham’s reply was that if a mad dog, refereeing to Hitler, got loose in the Parachinar

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<sup>31</sup> Ibidl; 2

<sup>32</sup> IORL, “Governor Report No. 13”, 9<sup>th</sup> July 1941

<sup>33</sup> IORL, ”Governor Report No. 13”, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1941, D670/16

<sup>34</sup> IORL, “Cunningham's correspondence”, p.5, D670/19

<sup>35</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism*, 172



Bazar, the Shias and Sunnis would combine and shoot it.<sup>36</sup> He further writes that this remark has been repeated along the border and accepted as a reasonable statement of the case.<sup>37</sup>

Apart from keeping the temperature high against the anti-British forces, the authorities also wanted to employ the tribes for the war. The *Ulema* were persuaded to deliver speeches encouraging enrolment in the army that had an important effect upon the people.<sup>38</sup> The *Jamiat-ul- Ulema-i- Sarhad* arranged tours of different villages for the purpose of encouraging enlistment in the army and said openly that the interests and friends of the Great Briton and Islam were now identical.<sup>39</sup> The leading Khattak *mullahs* toured the southern districts preaching that it was religious duty of the Muslims to fight for the British. In his report on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1939, the governor had already anticipated and writes that the most virile tribes – the Mehsuds and the Afridis especially- would like to provide excellent reliable material and service anywhere not too close to their own homes.<sup>40</sup> While on three days tour to district Kohat, Bannu and D.I. Khan, he writes that the flow of recruits in the Indian army was as good without any influence of the Congress propaganda and visit of Abdul Ghaffar Khan to Bannu and that the people are least concerned with politics.<sup>41</sup> George Cunningham again left for a ten days tour of Bannu, D.I. Khan, Tank and Miranshah, the headquarters of North Waziristan on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1940 for raising 20 platoons of Frontier Constabulary (FC).<sup>42</sup> The enlistment of the extra platoons to increase the strength of the Frontier Constabulary had an excellent effect among different tribes. The opportunity was particularly welcomed by the Afridis and large numbers of young men with

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<sup>36</sup> IORL, "Governor's Report No. 15", 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1941, D670/16, see also Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and nationalism*, 136

<sup>37</sup> Ibid;

<sup>38</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's correspondence", p. 3, D670/19

<sup>39</sup> Ibid; 4

<sup>40</sup> IORL, "Governor Report No. 17", 17<sup>th</sup> September 1939, p. 5, D670/15

<sup>41</sup> Ibid; "GR No. 22", 24<sup>th</sup> November 1939, p. 2

<sup>42</sup> Ibid; "GR No. 2", 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1940, p. 2



good physique appeared for enrolment.<sup>43</sup> On 20<sup>th</sup> March 1940, the governor was assured by a huge *jirga* of Afridi *maliks* that they would do all in their power to resist any aggression by the Bolshevik Russia which they considered as a menace to Islam.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, the authorities received a petition of 2000 Mehsuds of Makeen area by May 1940 assuring loyalty to the British in case of any aggression from Russia.<sup>45</sup> Unlike the hard times of the 1930s where the British were confronted with tough non violent resistance in the settled districts and armed resistance from the Frontier tribes, the war compelled the British to give employment to the people in the Frontier. According to the recruiting officer at Peshawar, all the demands for enlistment had been easily met by all the classes in the settled districts as well as the tribal territory.<sup>46</sup> By 1941, the Inspector General of Police proposed increase in the police from 6500 to 21000 with additional 9000 levies forces as a result of the rising Japanese and German advancement which was accepted by the provincial and central governments.<sup>47</sup> The British used to spend 10 million pounds annually in controlling the Frontier Tribes keeping the lid on Waziristan during the entire period of war.<sup>48</sup> The army employment in the province expanded fivefold from 8,828 to 41,201.<sup>49</sup> The British authorities however thought it foolish to give the Wazir tribesmen infantry training and were only enlisted in transport and labour units.<sup>50</sup> Besides giving employment to the people in the army and Frontier Constabulary, war committees were established throughout the province including the tribal areas. Friendly tribal *maliks*, *Khan Bahadars* and *Nawabs*

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<sup>43</sup> IORL, "GR No. 4", 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1940, p. 5, D670/16

<sup>44</sup> IORL, "GR No. 6", 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1940, D670/15

<sup>45</sup> Alan Warren, *Waziristan: the Faqir of Ipi and the Indian Army the North-West Frontier Revolt of 1936-37*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 256

<sup>46</sup> IORL, "GR No. 9", 9<sup>th</sup> May 1940, p. 4, D670/15

<sup>47</sup> IORL, "Official Report by Mr. A.F. Perrott, C.I.E, Inspector General of Police, NWFP on the developments in his command arising out of the war conditions", p. 1, F161/181

<sup>48</sup> Marsh Brandon, *Ramparts of Empire: British Imperialism and India's Afghan Frontier 1918- 1948*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 239

<sup>49</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 170

<sup>50</sup> Warren, *Waziristan: the Faqir of Ipi*, 255



contributed to the war fund starting from rupees 2000 to 25,000 with the Wali of Swat and Nawab of Dir as the biggest contributors.<sup>51</sup> The Ahmadzai Wazir *maliks* of South Waziristan offered Rupees 2000 and the Utmanzai *maliks* in North Waziristan offered 25,000 during *jirgas* held with George Cunningham in May 1941.<sup>52</sup> The donations to the war efforts offered by the tribal *maliks* were often deducted from the allowances given to them by the government.<sup>53</sup> The success of the British war efforts through the use of religion can be gauged by the letter of the Viceroy. After one year of the war, the Viceroy Linlithgow writes to the secretary of state for India, Amry that,

“The tribal area is quiescent. Some of the tribes have expressed an active desire to repel any Russian aggression. It is very encouraging that the Mohmands which gave a tough trouble last year have set up a Mohmand War Committee. The only part which has caused anxiety during the war is the Afridis of Tirah. The reaction of the Faqir is nervous who has been a source of trouble since 1936 and raiding the settled districts in the middle of 1939. He has reverted back to the tactics of attacking government offices, troops and convoys killing several British soldiers. The chiefs of Chitral, Swat and Dir have each given considerable sums of money in my war fund and promised regular contributions”.<sup>54</sup>

The Secretary of State in his reply to the Viceroy about the relatively peaceful and encouraging situation in the tribal area writes that,

“It is certainly an agreeable surprise that in the war time the Frontier should have remained quiet and even have produced loyal offers of support from some of the tribes. In Waziristan of course we had the pre war trouble. But things do not seem to be any worse than they were in 1937. We must be grateful to Cunningham and his officers not to mention the military and air forces for this happy state of affairs. He

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<sup>51</sup> IORL, “Cunningham Diary”, 10<sup>th</sup> January 1942, D670/4

<sup>52</sup> Warren, Alan. *Waziristan*, 256

<sup>53</sup> Ibid;

<sup>54</sup> IORL, “Extract from private letter of Lord Linlithgow to Amry”, 29<sup>th</sup> August 1940, L/PS/12/3265



has also been of great help to have maintained cordial relations with the Afghan government. Credit must largely be due to Fraser- Taytler's admirable handling of the relationship with the Afghan government.<sup>55</sup>

The pro-British attitude of the Afghan government had also played a role in making the propaganda of the British authorities as a success. Apart from the *mullahs* at Swat, Buner, Peshawar, Charsadda, Kohat, Karak, D.I. Khan, Lakki and Bannu various *mullahs* were paid for the purpose in Bajaur, Kurram, Waziristan, Mohmand, Khyber and Tirah areas where more than twenty *mullahs* in each agency preached to help the British in case of war with the Bolsheviks and later on with the Germans, Italians and also to get employment with the British against the Japanese. Barkatullah Mujahid who was in direct contact with the governor and Haji Gul Sahib was preaching in Bajaur, Nur Hassan (prayer leader of Parachinar mosque) in Kurram, Faqir of Shawa, Gian *mullah*, Ghazi *mullah* and others were trying to tame the Faqir of Ipi in Waziristan, *mullah* Abdul Baqi in Tirah was convinced by the political agent to preach and work against the Germans and Japanese as leading figures.<sup>56</sup> The spread of extended propaganda network throughout the province and its tribal areas with the help of *mullahs* and Khan Bahadurs in the Frontier together with the pro-British approach of the Afghan rulers minimized not only the armed struggle of the tribes but also the non violent struggle of the Khudai Khidmatgars against the British.

### **5.3 Role of the Afghan Rulers and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Tribal Areas**

The propaganda succeeded to great extent in changing the religious tone of the people in favor of the British. The anti British attitude of people was not only diverted against the Bolsheviks and Germans but also against the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier who were

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<sup>55</sup> IORL, "Letter from Secretary of State to the Viceroy", 14<sup>th</sup> October 1940, L./PS/12/3265

<sup>56</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's correspondence", pp. 8-10, D670/19



considered as pro Hindu and hence against the religion of Islam. The Faqir of Ipi in Waziristan and Afridis of Tirah despite various attempts of pacifying them by the British paid *mullahs* were exceptions who continued their resistance to the British and laid dozens of lives during the war. The governor in his report in 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1940 stated that with the exception of Waziristan the tribal area as a whole had remained quite.<sup>57</sup> The number of attacks by the Faqir of Ipi decreased looking at the number of *Fatwas* issued by various religious leaders in favor of the British, meeting him or sending letters by those leaders to the former to abstain from fighting during the war. However, the governor ruled out the possibility of moving troops from Waziristan to the Barma front which according to Cunningham would be disastrous and seen as a British retreat by the Tribes.<sup>58</sup> *Mullah* Fazal Din Mehsud who was son of the *Mullah* Powinda and a trouble maker, was also won over by the British. They however, could not win the Faqir of Ipi to their side. Kuli Khan also visited the Mohmand area and met Badshah Gul, son of staunch anti-British leader, Haij Sahib of Turangzai to do propaganda against the ex King of Afghanistan and in favor of the incumbent Afghan regime.<sup>59</sup> Badshah Gul was also indirectly assisted by the governor through Molvi Barkatullah who was in the habit of meeting the Governor and was paid 1000 for convincing Babra *mullah* to leave his antagonism towards the former and that later would be in favor of the British in case the former was making any trouble.<sup>60</sup>

Badshah Gul was also in close communication with the Afghan authorities for propagating and issuing *Fatwas* against Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Khudai Khidmatgars in the newspapers who were regarded as friends of the Hindus.<sup>61</sup> Badshah Gul has also been in touch with the Muslim

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<sup>57</sup> IORL, "Governor Report No. 10", 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1940, p. 4, D670/15

<sup>58</sup> Brandon, "*Ramparts of Empire*", 240

<sup>59</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's correspondence", p. 4, D670/19

<sup>60</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's correspondence", p. 7, D670/19

<sup>61</sup> Fazal ur Rahim Saqi, *Khudai Khidmatgari*", Pashto, (Peshawar: Bacha Khan Research Centre, 2012), 101 Fazal ur Rahim Saqi was a diehard non violent soldier of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization and right hand of Abdul



League.<sup>62</sup> According to Fazl-ur- Rahim who was sent as a leader of the delegation to Bajaur by Abdul Ghaffar Khan on 19<sup>th</sup> August 1942, asked Badshah Gul as to why was he propagating and issuing *Fatwas* in the newspapers against Abdul Ghaffar Khan.? Badshah Gul told him that he was considered by the Afghan rulers as future Governor of the Frontier in case of the British leaving the region and that only Abdul Ghaffar Khan being a popular leader was an obstacle in his way.<sup>63</sup> According to Badshah Gul, the British had assured the Afghan King that in case of Japanese victory and taking over India, the British would hand over the Frontier and the tribal territories to Afghanistan.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, the British rulers had also made it sure that the Afghan government after Amanullah Khan was on the side of the former and that no German and Italian agents in Afghanistan succeed in creating a great trouble in the tribal area against British. The Afghan government was also taking most of the credit for getting Badshah Gul to do the propaganda.<sup>65</sup> The British had however extended their propaganda to Khost, Nangrahar, Gardiz and Kandahar areas of Afghanistan despite the fact that the two had signed an agreement of mutual friendship in September 1939 for helping each other and no interference in each others affairs.<sup>66</sup> The Afghan rulers had previously reached and signed friendship and mutual cooperation agreement with the Germans on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1937.<sup>67</sup> However, the close cooperation of the Afghan government was needed by the British as never before during the Second World War. While the Afghan rulers could not control the activities of German and Italian agents in Afghanistan due to its internal weak position, the British too had extended the

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Ghaffar Khan. He has been sent as leader of delegations to the tribal areas by Abdul Ghaffar Khan and spent more than three years preaching non violence and unity against the British rule in the Pakhtun region. Besides, he has written books and diaries about his visits and preaching in Pashto language.

<sup>62</sup> IORL, "Governor Fortnightly Reports about the Situation the NWFP 1939-40", p.11, D670/15

<sup>63</sup> Fazal ur Rahim Saqi, *Da Sabr Jang*, Pashto,(Charsadda: Pakhtunkhwa Study Center, 2013), 87

<sup>64</sup> Ghaffar Khan, *Zama Zwand au Jaddo Jehad*, (Peshawar, nd), 524

<sup>65</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's correspondence", p. 4, D670/19

<sup>66</sup> IORL, "Anglo- Afghan Agreement of 1939-40", 30<sup>th</sup> December 1939, R/12/113

<sup>67</sup> IORL, "Telegram from Minister in Kabul to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs", 30<sup>th</sup> September 1941, R/12/123



propaganda into the Afghan areas. According to Cunningham, Colonel Robinson had managed to carry out propaganda in the Khilji Pakhtun tribes of Afghanistan that the Hazara and other non Pakhtun communities wanted to fight on the side of the Germans and Italians and they had been prepared to fight their own Afghan communities for the British political interests.

Most of the anti British nationalist tribes in the tribal agencies viz-a-viz the Afridis, the Mehsuds and Mohmands not to speak of the tribes living in the southern districts liked the Khudai Khidmatgars due to their anti British struggle for independence. The armed attack of these tribes during the civil disobedience of 1930 as a result of the British repression in the administered area is a clear proof of their sympathy and love with the freedom struggle. Moreover the active participation of Afridis, Wazirs, Mohmands and other tribal elders in the meetings and political gatherings of the Khudai Khidmatgars in the settled districts for a common cause shows their interconnected and a common cause. This is also true that many of the tribal elders and *mullahs* were not only loyal to the British rather actively propagated partly on the instigation of the later and partly with the help of the Afghan rulers due to the pro- Delhi stand of the Khudai Khidmatgars. The premier of the NWFP, Dr. Khan Sahib and many Khudai Khidmatgar ministers had tried several times in 1939 to convince the British governor George Cunningham to allow them to the tribal areas for solving their disputes with the British. However, George Cunningham rejected their proposal as they themselves were anti British and untrustworthy for the provincial authorities.<sup>68</sup>

On the contrary, when Ghulam Muhammad and other agitators came to Tirah in September 1939, *fatwas* were issued by the *mullahs* that those who work for bringing the ex- King Amanullah Khan to Afghanistan or against the present Afghan government were enemies of

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<sup>68</sup> IORL, "Governor's Fortnightly Reports about the Situation the NWFP 1939-40", Mss Eur D670/15



Islam and ‘Kafirs and be killed’ and this was a common talk in Tirah, Bajaur and Mohmand area in the early 1940.<sup>69</sup> These *fatwas* were issued because the governor thought that the return of Amanullah Khan or his leading members to Kabul would be dangerous for the British.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, the anti-British and pro German propaganda was infiltrating to Tirah from Afghanistan where German agents had started their work with the consent if not invitation of the Afghan ruling family.<sup>71</sup> The German, Russian and Italian agents were busy in alienating the Afghan King and premier from the British through the old slogan of ‘Afghanistan irredenta’ that all country up to the Indus belonged to latter.<sup>72</sup> By end of 1943, the British authorities found a well-known *mullah* in D.I. Khan who issued *fatwa* referring to the Faqir of Ipi who was a potential threat to the Afghan government ‘that it was unlawful to receive money from the Germans and Italians, instigating attacks on roads and to set one’s self up as a temporal ruler thus weakening the Afghan King’.<sup>73</sup> In response, the Afghan government did not show any hostility to the British and considered the Faqir of Ipi in the tribal area and Khudai Khidmatgars in the province real threat. The anti-British Faqir of Ipi was not favorite of the Afghan rulers due to his large number of armed and committed tribesmen even among the Pakhtun tribes of Afghanistan and considered as a threat to the Kingdom. Moreover, the Faqir of Ipi was considered more nearer to the deposed King Amanullah Khan who was also anti British, pro German and had already fought the Third Anglo- Afghan war. The governor reported that the Faqir had received reputation of being pro Amanullah and receiving constant communication from the German legation at Kabul.<sup>74</sup> The Afghan rulers were not supporting the anti-British Faqir of Ipi but

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<sup>69</sup> Mss Eur D670/19 (Cunningham's correspondence with external affairs department, propaganda through Mullahs, 1939-46.

<sup>70</sup> IORL, “GR No. 10”, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1940, p. 4, D670/15

<sup>71</sup> IORL, “GR No. 11”, 9<sup>th</sup> June 1940, p. 3, D670/15

<sup>72</sup> IORL, “GR No. 13”, 9<sup>th</sup> July 1940, p. 3, D670/15

<sup>73</sup> IORL, “Cunningham's correspondence”, p. 3, D670/19

<sup>74</sup> IORL, “GR No. 14”, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1940, p. 2, D670/15



avored the pro-British and pro- Afghan Badshah Gul who was looking for leading the Pakhtuns living on British side of the Durand Line.

The Khudai Khidmatgar leaders on the other hand were neither openly supporting the Faqir of Ipi nor publicly denouncing his armed activities against the British. They were however trying from the start of the war to convince the Governor to let them send a delegation to Waziristan for bringing peace to the region. In April 1940, the Peshawar Congress *Jirga* (committee) requested George Cunningham for a permission to visit Waziristan. However, permission was not granted to them. The governor writes “that it was clear that the Red Shirt’s deputations were sincere to the extent of improving matters in Waziristan. They also had the ulterior motive of raising the prestige of the Congress among the tribes and that they should publicly denounce activities of the Faqir of Ipi and his followers”.<sup>75</sup> Again, when the British propaganda was high in the tribal area, Abdul Ghaffar Khan sent a letter to George Cunningham in 1942 seeking permission for allowing the Khudai Khidmagars to the area with the pledge that they did not plan to preach against the British government but peace and unity among the tribes.<sup>76</sup> However, no response was given by the governor. Another letter was sent by Abdul Ghaffar Khan through Yonus Jan who was going to visit the governor that he will send Khudai Khidmatgars to the tribal area on 15<sup>th</sup> August with or without the government permission. In response to the second letter, the governor’s reply was that everyone was allowed to do what was lawful but not what was unlawful.<sup>77</sup> However, Yonus Jan while delivering letter to the governor saw that the later had called in a meeting of Deputy Commissioners and all the Political Agents of the tribal agencies at his residence in Nathiagali instructing them that the Khudai Khidmatgars should be allowed in

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<sup>75</sup> IORL, “GR No. 9”, 9<sup>th</sup> May 1940, p. 4, D670/15

<sup>76</sup> D.G Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan: Faith is a Battle*, (New Delhi: Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1967), 348

<sup>77</sup> IORL, “Cunningham Diary”, 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1942, D670/4



the districts but be dealt with in the tribal area through the agents.<sup>78</sup> The *mullahs* from Khattak area, Hangu, Thal and Miranzai valley were already out in the villages for countering the Congress (Khudai Khidmatgars) propaganda and convincing the people to cooperate with the British in the war.<sup>79</sup>

Looking at the widespread religious propaganda throughout the province and the tribal area, it was clear that the British could not allow persons to preach about peace or arouse anti war feelings among the tribes. Uniting the Pakhtuns and stopping them from war was directly against the British political interests. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars on the other hand did not consider the Frontier tribes as a different entity from the Pakhtuns of settled districts.<sup>80</sup> Different delegations were sent to the tribal area with clear message for being peaceful and away from the British war and also to maintain unity in their ranks which was contrary to the British War time policy.<sup>81</sup> The first delegation under Kamdar Khan was sent to Malakand. However, they were stopped by the pro British local Khans and urged to go back. On observing the love of the local people, they refused to go back. The Khans sent a *Jirga* to Abdul Ghaffar Khan that he should direct his Khudai Khidmatgars to go to Bajaur instead of Malakand as they were compelled by the political agent.<sup>82</sup> Upon receiving the letter from Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Khudai Khidmatgars left for Bajaur. However, the British as well as Badshah Gul, the son of Haji of Turangzai had already propagated against the Khudai Khidmatgars in Bajaur by preaching that they were agents of the Hindus and wanted to enslave the Muslims.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, 522-523.

<sup>79</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's correspondence", p. 5, D670/19

<sup>80</sup> Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, 520

<sup>81</sup> Mohammad Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, (Bombay: Hind Kitabs Ltd, 1947), 97

<sup>82</sup> Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand*, 523

<sup>83</sup> Ibid;



Fazal-ur- Rahim Saqi along with Faqir Mohammad and Abdul Majeed were sent to Tirah tribal region on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1942 in order to preach unity, end to tribal feuds and spread anti-war propaganda. The political agent of Malakand agency, Shaikh Mehboob Ali had tried to arrest them by standing dozens of Khasadaar in their way. However, they successfully reached Tirah and holding *jirgas* with all the *Khels* (sections) of the Afridis and Orakzai and stayed there for two and half years.<sup>84</sup> They remained there since March 1945 and enjoyed hospitality of the general population of the area.<sup>85</sup> Later on, *Malik* Nawab Zaman Khan Afridi warned the delegation to leave the area.<sup>86</sup> Another delegation consisting of Abdul Hakeem and General Abdur-e- Rehman of Bhattani area were sent to South Waziristan for preaching the message of unity and brotherhood among the Mehsud tribes. However, they were arrested by the political authorities of Waziristan and sent to *jail* for two years imprisonment. The *maliks* of Kurram agency had put the delegation of Khudai Khidmatgars into a Truck and sent them back to Hangu under pressure from the political agent.<sup>87</sup> Meer Taj Mohammad was sent to North Waziristan where he succeeded in meeting the Faqir of Ipi delivering the message of brotherhood by Abdul Ghaffar Khan.<sup>88</sup> However, he did not visit the common villages as was told by the Faqir of Ipi that the tribes of Waziristan are already aware and are struggling against the British.<sup>89</sup> Although, the methods of resistance by the Faqir of Ipi and Khudai Khidmatgars were very much different but their objective was one- freedom from the British.

The British authorities tried best to stop entrance of the Khudai Khidmatgar from delivering anti war speeches and the *maliks* in loyalty to their masters treated them contrary to all sets of values

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<sup>84</sup> Saqi, *Khudai Khidmatgar*, 109

<sup>85</sup> Yunus, *Frontier Speaks*, 97

<sup>86</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism*, 135

<sup>87</sup> Ghaffar Khan, *Zama Zhwand*, 527

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*; 526

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*;



of hospitality prevalent in the Pakhtun society. The *Jamiat-ul- Ulema- Sarhad* used to visit Kohat, the *mullahs* of Mardan employed by the Wali of Swat and those of Peshawar had renewed their propaganda against the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars in June 1942 on the line of Pakistan scheme of the Muslim League and their pro-British approach.<sup>90</sup> Despite such embarrassing and harsh attitude of the loyal *maliks* and *mullahs*, the Khudai Khidmatgars made their way into the tribal area and remained there for months and years peaching unity and anti war propaganda among the tribes. However, the network of propaganda, money distribution, portraying the war as defense of Islam, the help provided by the Muslim League and the Afghan rulers, the Khudai Khidmatgars failed in their mission of anti War propaganda and uniting the Pakhtuns of the Frontier and its tribes.

#### **5.4 “Quit India” Movement and the NWFP Politics**

Under pressure from the public opinion at home and abroad and due to the possible Japanese invasion of India, the government in England under Winston Churchill sent its cabinet minister Sir Stafford Cripps who arrived in Delhi on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1942 with a draft declaration for pacifying the Indian leaders about the future plan of the British government.<sup>91</sup> Sir Cripps explained to the Indians the government proposal for Indian self-rule in case of their cooperation in the war. The declaration of the Cripps mission tried to satisfy the leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League by declaring that the future constitution of India would be framed by the constituent assembly and also accepting the demand for Pakistan in vague terms by giving choice to the provinces to frame their own constitutions which would enjoy the status of the Indian Union. While the Muslim League expressing gratitude by accepting two or more Indian Unions rejected due to the fact that the proposals were not open for changes and modification that

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<sup>90</sup> IORL, “Cunningham's correspondence”, p. 6, D670/19

<sup>91</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism*, 130



needed alternative proposals. The Congress rejected the proposal on the grounds that it did not accept the independence of India as a whole and prepared themselves for another anti government movement by passing a resolution on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1942 at Bombay for an immediate end to the British rule and to 'Quit India'.<sup>92</sup> The resolution coincided with the Japanese bombing of Madras and Calcutta and advance of their forces in the Manipur district of Assam. All the Congress leaders including Gandhi and Nehru were arrested on 9<sup>th</sup> August and in the NWFP half a dozen Congress members of the assembly were arrested.<sup>93</sup> The arrests were followed by unrest throughout the country and attacks on government installations. The Congress Working Committee was declared illegal with the exception of the Frontier Congress Committee which was treated differently. The Muslim League termed the Quit India movement as an attack on Muslim India and M.A. Jinnah called upon the Muslims to stay away from the movement.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his fellow members of Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier succeeded in organizing picketing the liquor shops and courts.<sup>94</sup> With the growing intensity of the movement, the authorities also changed its policy of leniency at least for the leadership of the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier where Abdul Ghaffar Khan himself was severely beaten and arrested along other provincial leaders on 27<sup>th</sup> October, 1942.<sup>95</sup> In district Bannu alone 439 picketers were arrested.<sup>96</sup> A group of more than 750 Khudai Khidmatgars in Peshawar, 300 in Mardan and crowds in Kohat appeared for picketing district courts.<sup>97</sup> The Khudai Khidmatgars were mercilessly beaten till they fell unconscious.<sup>98</sup> Most of them would get injured and removed by the Khudai Khidmatgars to their relief camps. The government tried their best to

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<sup>92</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*, 145

<sup>93</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1992), 63

<sup>94</sup> Ibid; 64

<sup>95</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*, 147

<sup>96</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism*, 169

<sup>97</sup> Ibid;

<sup>98</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 354



crush the movement. The Muslim Deputy Commissioner, Iskandar Mirza excelled the British by beating to death Syed Akbar at Nowshera and went on to the extent of poisoning vegetables in the Khudai Khidmatgar camps.<sup>99</sup> Afterwards, groups of ten people would present themselves every day in the police stations for arrests by defying the government openly. Intense and cruel repression prevailed throughout India. About sixty thousand people including more than six thousands in the Frontier were arrested up to the end of 1942 and the jails were overcrowded.<sup>100</sup> By April 1943, the Frontier Congress leaders called it off on their own and movement did not materialized as it was anticipated by the leaders. The Khans and parties other than the Congress helped the British authorities in organizing propaganda against the Congress. The British authorities were successful in keeping the Frontier quite during the war and resistance of the nationalists was minimized by using force, bribes, wholesale arrests and well planned pro British propaganda by using religion presenting the war in the defense of Islam. The Muslim Leaguers provided all sorts of help to the British and the governor on 23<sup>rd</sup> September reported that the Leaguers were very helpful to the authorities in doing the right sort of propaganda.<sup>101</sup> The Leaguers by helping Cunningham were eager to exploit the self imposed eclipse of the Congress.<sup>102</sup> However, the provincial Muslim League ministry which was only in office due to the arrest of prominent Congress leaders and common workers proved incapable of running the affairs of the province.<sup>103</sup>

The Congress leaders and workers in India were released only after Germany surrendered to the allies in May 1945 in order to seek Indian cooperation for defeating the Japanese.<sup>104</sup> However, the absence of Congress leadership from the political scene provided M.A. Jinnah and Muslim

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid; 355

<sup>100</sup> Eknath, "A Man to Match His Mountains, 172. See also Tendulkar, D.G. *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, p. 358

<sup>101</sup> Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, p. 64

<sup>102</sup> Warren, *Waziristan: the Faqir of Ipi*, p. 255

<sup>103</sup> For details see Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism*, pp. 137-148

<sup>104</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 359



League a chance to contact the masses for popularizing the League program and ideology for the formation of a separate homeland for Indian Muslims.

### **5.5 Rise of the Muslim League in the Frontier**

The resignations of the Congress ministries from the government and British policy of countering political adversaries through religion not only helped in minimizing the role of the Congress in the NWFP. The Muslim League during the war years not only emerged as the representative body of the Indian Muslims in India but also succeeded in gaining popularity and winning seats in the NWFP during the 1946 elections. Earlier, M.A. Jinnah in order to bring unity among the Frontier Muslim league members and to popularize the party had arrived in Peshawar on 18 October, 1936 and was greeted by 400 persons.<sup>105</sup> A branch of Frontier Muslim League was formed with Khuda Bukhsh as president and Pir Buksh as Secretary along with other members as Executive Committee. After seeing various local politicians, he visited Edwards College and Islamia College and advise the students to advance themselves politically and educationally. Jinnah also visited Landi Kotal on the invitation of Malik Saida Khan Shinwari. He was given special concession by the authorities to visit Landi Kotal and Torkham of Khyber Agency as in the past any kind of political activity in the tribal territory was prohibited and no politician including Abdul Ghaffar Khan was allowed to visit the area. The delegation of the tribal area informed M.A. Jinnah about the injustices of the British Indian government with the tribes and snatching of Kajuri Maidan as a punishment for supporting the civil disobedience movement of the Congress in the 1930. They complained that they were deprived of all necessities of daily life and were not even allowed to get hold of a match box<sup>106</sup> and requested

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<sup>105</sup> Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, 27

<sup>106</sup> Ibid; 28



M.A. Jinnah to raise his voice for their rights and he agreed.<sup>107</sup> The Muslim League leaders lack popular support of the masses and were unable to field a single candidate for the 1937 elections.<sup>108</sup>

According to the governor, the Muslim League was a kind of 'Motor League' where they used to visit each other's villages for tea parties.<sup>109</sup> Apart from living comfortable lives, the members of the Muslim League who were mostly pro-British bigger Khans and *Jagirdars* and busy in exploiting every religious event by undertaking religious propaganda against the minorities in the province. The governor in his meeting with the Chief Minister Dr. Khan on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1938 added that after the murder of a Hindu and a Sikh by three Muslim boys at broad daylight at Mayar (Mardan) that the communal feelings were getting worse partly due to the religious propaganda of the Muslim League.<sup>110</sup> After the resignations of the Congress ministries in November 1939, the Muslim League leaders in the Frontier were touring the province energetically profiting from the temporary disappearance of the Congress ministry of Dr. Khan Sahib.<sup>111</sup> On the other hand, the British were ready supporting any party who would assist them in the war and to counter the Congress and Khudai Khidmatgar's propaganda against the war.

In a letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> January 1940, the Viceroy wrote to the Muslim League President, M.A. Jinnah that whether there was a chance of forming any government in the NWFP and the later requested that he be given time to consult Muslim League leaders of the province.<sup>112</sup> M. A. Jinnah and Sikander Hayat pressed Aurangzeb, the Muslim League member in the provincial assembly to form the ministry. On being informed of the weak party position in the assembly

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<sup>107</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism*, p. 98

<sup>108</sup> Khan Abdul Wali Khan, *Facts Are Facts: The Untold Story of India's Partition*, (Peshawar: Bacha Khan Trust, 2006), 98

<sup>109</sup> IORL, "Cunningham's Diary 1937-1940", D670/3

<sup>110</sup> Ibid;

<sup>111</sup> IORL, "GR No. 24", 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1939, p. 2, D670/15

<sup>112</sup> Wali Khan. *Facts Are Facts*, 98



writes the governor that Jinnah sent a telegram: saying to Aurangzeb that “form the ministry at any cost, even interim ministry, and waiverers will come afterwards.” On being told that a ministry with working majority was impossible, he wired: “missing opportunity is a great mistake. Form coalition ministry, make every sacrifice and let others be ministers.”<sup>113</sup> The number of Muslim supporters of the Muslim League was 14, the Hindu- Sikh nationalists 4, the independents 3 making 21 out in the house of 50 members. This combination was the best one could be hoped for, though it was not certain as the Hindus and Sikhs were definitely reluctant to form a coalition ministry due to the communal issues of the later with the Muslim League.<sup>114</sup> According to the governor, these leaders were self seekers and known by their rank and file and that there was no chance of forming an alternative ministry to that of the Congress at the time.<sup>115</sup> The governor assured the Muslim members of the assembly that he could help them in forming a ministry provided they sink their personal ambitions, work for the good of the province and reach an agreement with the Muslim and Hindu members for their support.<sup>116</sup> Saadullah Khan, the Muslim League member in the assembly was an aspirant for the premiership. However, Aurangzeb, who wanted to form the Muslim League ministry under his own premiership, went to Delhi and after discussing the matter with M.A. Jinnah on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1940 got his approval. Upon arriving, Aurangzeb visited the whole province presenting himself as the champion of Islam with the backing of Governor George Cunningham and two senior bureaucrats, Iskandar Mirza and Shaikh Mehboob Ali.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism*, p. 138

<sup>114</sup> IORL, “GR No.21”, 12<sup>th</sup> November 1939, p. 2, D670/15

<sup>115</sup> IORL, “GR No. 24”, 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1939, p. 2, D670/15

<sup>116</sup> IORL, “GR No. 4”, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1940, p. 2, D670/15

<sup>117</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 139



In January 1943, the existing members of the provincial assembly came to forty. Five members had by this time died, two were in prison and three accepted service of the Crown.<sup>118</sup> Keeping in view this figure, twenty two votes in the assembly were required by Aurangzeb for forming the ministry which was also demanded by the governor. However, the Viceroy, who was also in favor of forming a Muslim League ministry, wrote to Cunningham to make the ministry by keeping in view desire of M.A. Jinnah.<sup>119</sup> M.A. Jinnah had also requested the Viceroy to ask the Governor Cunningham to take special interest in the matter as he considered a Muslim League ministry as a slap on face of the Congress and also NWFP being the Muslim majority province would complete its claim as representative body of all the Indian Muslims.<sup>120</sup> On recommendation from the Viceroy, Cunningham agreed to form the ministry with sixteen firm votes with the hope of getting more votes in time. The new Muslim League ministry was formally installed on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1943 under Aurangzeb as chief minister and he included his wholehearted support for the British war efforts in the province in his first public statement.<sup>121</sup> After making the ministry, another important task for the party was winning the by- elections in order to create space for itself among the people. Like the British, the Muslim League leaders were playing the religious card for its political victory in the province comprising of ninety six percent of Muslims. By supporting the British war propaganda and formally passing the Pakistan resolution in March 1940 at Lahore, the Muslim League used the same religious card and tried hard to win the by-elections on 7<sup>th</sup> July over seven vacant posts in the assembly where four were reserved for the Muslims, two Hindus and one for the Sikhs. On 20<sup>th</sup> July 1943, M. A. Jinnah

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid; 140

<sup>119</sup> IORL, "Linlithgow to Cunningham", F 125/78

<sup>120</sup> Wali Khan. *Facts Are Facts*, 99

<sup>121</sup> IORL, "GR No. 10", 24<sup>th</sup> May 1943, D670/16



sent the following message to the Musalmans of NWFP since it was the province with ninety three percent Muslim population and crucial to the Pakistan scheme.

“All Muslim India’s eyes are today towards you. If you fail in duty, you will shock all the Musalmans of India. The Musalmans of India have great faith and hopes in you and believe that you will be unconquerable soldiers of Islam like your unconquerable rocks and through you Islam in India will be able to revive the glorious past”.<sup>122</sup>

Surprisingly, all four Muslim seats were won by the Frontier Muslim League. Dr. Khan Sahib met the governor and informed him of the malpractices and rigging of the officials and returning officers which were even acknowledged by the governor. Despite accepting the truth in the allegations raised by the Congress, the Governor reported to Lord Linlithgow about the success of the League’s candidates in the by elections in these words, “it is satisfactory to note that the Muslim League success in these by-elections are generally accepted as being a victory for the British government over the subversive elements in the country and the success of the former was result of organized propaganda of the government against the Congress and Khudai Khidmatgars”.<sup>123</sup> The wholehearted cooperation of the government in making the ministry, the Muslim League leaders paid back to the former in the form of complete loyalty. The Governor writes that the Chief Minister Aurangzeb is extremely amenable and anxious to do just what I want and seek my advice forgetting that it was actually the minister to advise the governor.<sup>124</sup>

As far as the working and administration of the new ministry is concerned, the governor after observing nepotism in jobs, interference with police investigation, discrimination in allocating government funds and tampering with judicial process warned the chief minister that either he

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<sup>122</sup> Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, 67

<sup>123</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*, 149

<sup>124</sup> IORL, “Cunningham’s Diary”, p, 6, D670/5



would give up the chair or must get new ministers.<sup>125</sup> Aurangzeb was profuse in his assurances of loyalty and desire to administer wisely and the governor thought of some truth in arguments of Aurangzeb that the public opinion would go against the ministry if it did not take interest in these small matters referring to the activities of the ministry.<sup>126</sup> Another prominent Muslim Leaguer, Saadullah Khan who was later expelled from the party wrote to M.A. Jinnah accusing Aurangzeb of corruption and told him that he would support any possible motion of no confidence against the Chief Minister.<sup>127</sup> President of the Frontier Muslim League, Taj Ali Khan also spoke against the corruption of the ministry in the management of war time rationing and informed Jinnah that the ministers were not functioning for the Muslim League but for themselves.<sup>128</sup> Cunningham informed Lord Wavell about the weak position and a likely no confidence motion against the ministry but the latter was more worried about the stand of any new ministry about the British war efforts rather than the Muslim League ministry.<sup>129</sup> The ministry could rule for two years when Dr. Khan Sahib tabled a motion of no confidence in 12<sup>th</sup> March 1945 and was carried by twenty four votes to eighteen and Dr. Khan was called in by the governor to form the ministry.<sup>130</sup> After securing victory by the Allied forces against the Axis powers during the Second World War in 1945, the British Indian authorities released the detained Congress leaders as a good will and the Viceroy Lord Wavell called in a conference of the Indian political parties at Simla in June 1945 for discussing and reaching the constitutional problem of India.<sup>131</sup> All the Indian political parties including the Congress and the Muslim League held discussions for reaching a settlement to the Indian Communal problem. The Conference ultimately failed as the Muslim

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid; 14

<sup>126</sup> Ibid; 15

<sup>127</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 145

<sup>128</sup> Ibid; 146

<sup>129</sup> Ibid;

<sup>130</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*, 150

<sup>131</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity*, 187



League demanded that the Congress would nominate only Hindus to the newly proposed Executive Council of the Viceroy and the former would nominate all the Muslims which was unacceptable to the Congress since it had support of larger number of Muslims including a Congress ministry in the Frontier. Similarly, the Muslim League had no ministries in the Muslim majority provinces like Punjab, Sindh and Assam.<sup>132</sup> The communal stand taken by the Muslim League however attracted prominent Congress parliamentary leaders that strengthened its position in the Frontier. Abdul Qaiyum Khan who had succeeded Dr. Khan Sahib as representative of the NWFP to the central legislative assembly joined the Muslim League and wrote to M.A. Jinnah on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1945 that, "I have decided to join the Muslim League and believe in the stand taken by you is correct. Any Muslim who opposes you is betraying the cause of Islam in India."<sup>133</sup> M.A. Jinnah appreciated his decision and hoped that other Congress Muslims should also join the Muslim League as there was no room for any honest Muslim to support the Congress.<sup>134</sup>

Leader of the Muslim League, M.A. Jinnah personally visited the Frontier in November 1945 and stayed for a week as part of campaign for the next general elections and his tour according to the governor Cunningham provided a fair propaganda for the League that strengthened the Muslim League position in the province. The Pakistan scheme also attracted Pir of Manki Sharif and tens of thousands of his followers after the tour of M.A. Jinnah to Nowshera on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1945 for inviting him to join the Muslim League and support its candidate in the coming general elections. According to an estimate, the Pir of Manki had more than seven hundred thousand followers in Peshawar valley and the surrounding Frontier tribes who

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<sup>132</sup> Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, 123

<sup>133</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 83

<sup>134</sup> Ibid;



contributed in popularizing the league's ideology.<sup>135</sup> Similarly, a network of *Ulema* under Maulana Shakirullah was formed who was sympathetic to the Muslim League and affiliated it with *Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i- Islam* led by Maulana Shabeer Ahmad Usmani. The *Ulema* who had propagated for the British during the Second World War played a crucial role in the development of Frontier Muslim League within a short span of time.

During the 1946 elections, the Muslim League after propagating in favor of the Pakistan scheme succeeded in gaining seventeen seats in the assembly of fifty. However, due to its numerical and organizational weakness, the Muslim League could not change the balance of power on religious polarization after the Second World War.<sup>136</sup> The North-West Frontier Province remained the strong hold of Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the history of Indian Muslims before the Muslim League defeated it an year before independence in 1947.<sup>137</sup> The use of political Islam used by the British during the war was then adopted by the Muslim League that exploited the sentiments of the Frontier Muslims on every communal issue happening in India for the fulfillment of Pakistan scheme and ultimately minimized the role of the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier and defeated the All Indian National Congress in keeping India united which would be discussed in the next chapter.

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<sup>135</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity*, 188

<sup>136</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement in India's North- West Frontier, 1901- 1947", Unpublished PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Political Science, (University of Columbia, 1977), 2

<sup>137</sup> Ibid; 1



## **Chapter Six**

### **Towards the Partition of India: Politics in the Frontier and the Tribal Areas (1946- 1948)**

The Labour Party in England came into power which had remained sympathetic towards India and the post war political conditions made it difficult for the British to prolong its rule in India. The new British prime minister declared in the British parliament that time had reached for giving responsibility of India to the Indians and announced general elections in the start of 1946 for moving forward. The political conference at Simla in June 1945 had already failed between the Congress and the Muslim League and the latter had to prove that it had support of the Indian Muslims and the sole Muslim representative body of all the Muslims in the general elections as it did not give the Congress the right to nominate any Muslim to the proposed Executive Council of the Viceroy. The All India Muslim League had the challenge before it in the Frontier to mobilize the Pakhtuns politically for achieving Pakistan where its political position had already been weakened by its inability, corruption and factional jealousies when George Cunningham appointed League ministry from 1943 to 1945.

The religious propaganda in favor of a separate Muslim state was carried out for winning the elections of February 1946 and enabled the League in securing considerable number of seats in the Muslim minority provinces. Interestingly, with the exception of Bengal, the Muslim League could not win the required number of seat for forming ministries in the Muslim majority provinces because there was no fear of Hindu domination. According to Governor Cunningham, the question of Hindu domination in the NWFP was simply laughable as it was a province



having ninety three percent Muslims. In addition to the British religious propaganda throughout the Frontier during the Second World War, the Muslim League also used the same religious card extensively and succeeded in securing seventeen seats in the assembly of fifty.

After the elections, the British prime minister, Atlee had also sent the cabinet mission on 26<sup>th</sup> March to solve the Indian problem and bring together the Congress and Muslim League on a common agenda for India. Upon arrival, the cabinet mission held discussions with all the political leaders and toured the whole of India. The mission recommended the grouping of Indian provinces on communal basis with a loose federation for keeping its unity and both the Congress and Muslim League accepted it albeit with certain reservations. However, the unfortunate speech delivered by Nehru in his capacity as president of the Congress saying that it could change or modify the grouping of the provinces any time that were grouped together by the cabinet mission led M.A. Jinnah and the Muslim League to boycott from joining the interim government and gave a call for a Direct Action Day on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1946 in Calcutta that left more than four thousands Muslims and Hindus dead and thousands others wounded. The Congress should have accepted the cabinet mission plan which could have satisfied the League for keeping the unity of India.<sup>1</sup> The violence in Calcutta was presented by the Muslim League in the NWFP as Hindu's atrocities over the Indian Muslims and the need for a separate Muslim country that led to arousing the religious feelings of the people against the Congress and minorities in the province.

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<sup>1</sup> Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, (New Delhi: Orient Longman Limited, 1959), 187 Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was a prominent religious as well as political leader and remained elected president of the Indian National Congress from 1939 to 1946. He was the sole spokesmen of the Congress engaged with the Viceroy Lord Wavell and the Muslim league during the cabinet mission plan soon after his release in 1945 after conclusion of the war since thousands of Indian nationalists including the Congress leaders were sent to prisons during the Quit India Movement of 1942 where they passed antiwar resolutions.



In order to avoid further violence, the Viceroy invited the Congress and League leaders for negotiations and convinced the later to join the interim government that was formed on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1946. On 26<sup>th</sup> October, the Muslim League thought it wise to join the interim government with the Congress rather than working outside the government. Being part of the government, the Muslim League leaders tried to work for achieving a loose Indian Federation and until then used the demand for Pakistan as a bargaining point. However, the uncompromising attitude of Central Congress leadership in giving adequate share in the government and having filled the Indian Muslims with communal feelings by M.A. Jinnah, the two parties could not come on a common point for framing the future constitution of India. Instead of cooperation with each other after the large scale communal violence, both the political parties were working in different directions. While the Congress was sidelining the Muslim League by considering itself as the true representative body of all the Indians, the later was trying to intensively propagate for achieving Pakistan by explaining the differences between the Hindus and the Muslims belonging to two different cultures and civilizations. In the NWFP, the Muslim Leaguers tried all what they could by exploiting religious sentiments of the people telling the people about brutalities of the Hindus over their co- religionists in the rest of India.

Meanwhile, Jawaharlal Nehru being vice president of the Viceroy's new Executive Council and head of the External Affairs responsible for the tribal matters, decided to undertake an official tour of the NWFP and the Frontier tribes in October 1946. Nehru's first step after coming into power was that he issued orders for stopping the on going bombing of the Mehsud villages in South Waziristan. However, his tour of the province and the tribal areas during the communal tensions proved more fruitful for the Muslim League than the Congress. In fact, the differences between Hindus and the Muslims in India have always been exploited by the British Indian



government.<sup>2</sup> The provincial British authorities had always been biased in favor of the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars due to their long struggle against colonialism.

The newly arrived governor Olaf Caroe was against the official tour of Nehru to the province and the tribal area and flew to Delhi for convincing the Viceroy to stop Nehru from visiting the province. However, the Viceroy showed his inability to stop a person who had become legally responsible for the Frontier and tribal affairs. Moreover, M.A. Jinnah wrote to the Viceroy in his reply that the Muslim League's central working committee had given no instructions to its workers in the Frontier for demonstrations. However, the assurance given by the League central command did not come true. Upon arrival in Peshawar on 16<sup>th</sup> October, Nehru was greeted with anti Congress slogans by the Muslim League workers and sympathizers. According to a secret intelligence report on 17 October 1946, the Muslim Leaguers were bent upon creating communal differences in Peshawar to avenge the treatment meted out to the Muslims in Calcutta and Bombay.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Nehru and the Khan Brothers were misapprehended and ill treated by the pro British *maliks* and the tour proved counter productive for the Congress and further boosted the cause of the Muslim League in the Frontier and its tribal areas. The Congress turned Muslim League leader, Abdul Qayyum informed M.A. Jinnah stating that, "What we could not achieve in several years, was in fact achieved within a week."<sup>4</sup>

In India, the communal violence once started in Bengal led to further violence in other areas and communalization of politics. The situation reached to a point of no return and the new Viceroy Lord Mountbatten had no other option but to work and announce the partition of India on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1947 with the approval of the Congress and Muslim League high command. The provinces

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid; 191

<sup>3</sup> Peshawar Archives, "IPS Diary", Bundle No. 39, Serial No. 633

<sup>4</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, 121



of Punjab and Bengal were to be divided between the Hindus and Muslims according to their populations. Moreover, the Congress leadership had also agreed upon regarding referendum in the North-West Frontier which was unacceptable to Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars of the Frontier. The Khan Brothers and the Khudai Khidmatgars thought that the Frontier provincial assembly should also have been given a choice for deciding fate of their province which was also given to the elected representatives of other provinces. The Khudai Khidmatgars were also in favor of seeking a third option of independent Pakhtunistan or no referendum at all which they considered as unrealistic because they thought that the people had voted them an year ago despite the communal propaganda of the Muslim League for the attainment of Pakistan. They demanded that the option of joining India should either be replaced with Independent Pakhtunistan or a third option be added for knowing will of the people which was rejected by the Viceroy. Hence, the Khudai Khidmatgars had no other option but to boycott the referendum which was held from 6<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> July 1947. Result of the votes casted in the referendum went in favor of joining Pakistan rather than India.<sup>5</sup> Besides, the fate of the tribal areas was left to the selected tribal elders and future governments because the tribal areas were not legally part of British India and there was no system of elections or adult franchise as they were represented by the tribal *maliks* appointed by the British political agents.

After the creation of Pakistan on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1947, the new governor general of Pakistan, M. A. Jinnah authorized the British governor of NWFP, George Cunningham to dismiss the Congress ministry of Dr. Khan Sahib and appointed a new Muslim League ministry under Abdul Qayyum. The fate of the tribal areas was informally decided by different tribal elders by showing their willingness of joining Pakistan in their *jirgas* with the new governor general of Pakistan, M.A.

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<sup>5</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism*, 226



Jinnah. Later on, the Frontier tribes were made part of Pakistan by the orders of governor general of Pakistan in 1950 through retrospective legislation and signing agreements with different tribal elders of the tribal areas.

The Khudai Khidmatgars turned their dismissal as the first unconstitutional and undemocratic step by the Muslim League in the newly created country. The newly appointed Muslim League provincial authorities could not tolerate any criticism and started crackdown against the Khan Brothers and Khudai Khidmatgars arresting thousands of people including the Khudai Khidmatgar leadership. After failing to convince the British for incorporating the option of Independent Pakhtunistan in the referendum, the Khudai Khidmatgars in the changed circumstances were demanding the unification of the Pakhtun regions and renaming them Pakhtunistan or Pakhtunkhwa with full provincial autonomy under a loose federation for which they had been struggling for long and Abdul Ghaffar Khan met Jinnah for the purpose with no fruitful outcome. The Khudai Khidmatgar organization was declared as illegal in June 1948 and banned by the provincial League ministry. Governor Cunningham writes about his meeting with Qaiyum Khan on the morning of 14<sup>th</sup> August 1947 who was to be installed as the new chief minister of the province just after few days and says that,

“He (Qaiyum Khan) was certain in his own mind that the Congress meant to do their best to make Pakistan a failure. He promised that if the Muslim League came into power, all abuses of the Congress ministry would be shut down with a bang. I think that he really means this. He said that he thought the sooner the dismissal of the Congress ministry the better. I said that I thought there was no chance of his hearing anything until the 16<sup>th</sup> of August”.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> IORL, Cunningham Diary 1947-1948, Mss Eur D670/6



Unfortunately, instead of recognizing the services and many sacrifices of the Khudai Khidmatgars for achieving freedom, the new government of Pakistan continued the same strategic policies of the British and declared them as traitors and foreign agents. Additionally, while the new governor general of Pakistan had hinted upon changing the political system in the tribal areas, subsequent Pakistani rulers never tried wholeheartedly to bring the tribal area into the mainstream Pakistan political system. Consequently, the tribal areas were changed into a hub of militancy and Talibanization by adopting a policy of supporting religious extremists and militant groups in the country for the sake of evolving a common Muslim identity and waging *Jihad* in Afghanistan in the 1980s and 1990s. The *Jihad* project started in Afghanistan by the Pakistani policy makers with support from the United States and the international community against the Russians in the 1980 led to the rise Taliban not only in Afghanistan but also the tribal areas of the Frontier. The tragic incident of 9/11 and the US invasion of Afghanistan further deteriorated the situation and most of the *Taliban* and *Al- Qaida* leadership took refuge in the tribal area that led to further increase in militancy and the area was changed into the most dangerous area. Had the Khudai Khidmatgar organization not been banned and its leaders arrested as traitors, they could have done a great job in saving the tribal areas from becoming hub of Talibanization and militancy through their non violent and constitutional approach for solving political problems.

### **6.1 Campaign for the General Elections (1945- 1946) and the Congress Victory in the Frontier**

The Labour Party came into power in July 1945 and the new Prime Minister Clement Atlee announced that the time has reached to shift power in India to the Indian hands. However, it was a slow process due to the political differences between the Congress and the Muslim League



over the future of India. The Simla Conference in June 1945 between the two major political parties had already been inconclusive as the Congress was not ready to recognize the Muslim League as the sole representative party of the Indian Muslims since it had also support of the large number of Muslims masses including the people of the NWFP. Moreover, the Muslim League did not have broad based support of the Muslims in the Muslim majority provinces like the Punjab, Sindh and the NWFP with the exception of Bengal. The British government wanted to know about the strength of the two political parties and the Viceroy on 21<sup>st</sup> August announced that general elections would be held in the start of the 1946.<sup>7</sup> The Muslim League had to prove in the elections that it represent the Indian Muslims by winning maximum number of seats in the Indian provinces particularly in the Muslim majority areas like the Punjab, Sindh and the NWFP. The Frontier was a major challenge for the Muslim League where practically, the Khudai Khidmatgars, majority of whom were ethnically Pakhtuns and affiliated with a Hindu dominated Congress party were ruling the province.

While the Muslim League in Frontier have already been weakened by the provincial leaders due their corruption and inability during their ministry appointed by the governor Cunningham from 1943 to 1945, the religious leaders like Pir of Manki Sahrif and others played a great role in its popularization as they had been sympathetic and inspired by the stand taken by the Muslim League for political rights of the Indian Muslims. These religious leaders had tens of thousands of followers and played a crucial role in spreading the message of Muslim League in the Frontier and the tribal areas.<sup>8</sup> Since, the Muslim League had already won sympathies of the religious leaders; it started a campaign for the coming general election on the question of a separate

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<sup>7</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 93

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Alan Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, (North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2016), 188



Muslim state in the form of Pakistan. The electorates were told by the Muslim Leaguers whether they want to be called as Hindus by casting votes in favor of the Congress or to remain Muslims by giving votes to the League candidates. The elections were held on the slogan of India or Pakistan and a battle between *Hinduism* and Islam.<sup>9</sup> Casting vote in favor of the League was considered as a vote for Islam. Mufti Mohammad Shafi gave *fatwa* according to which supporting the Congress was supporting *Kufr* and tantamount to finishing Islam from Hindustan.<sup>10</sup> The Pir of Manki Sahrif had issued *fatwas* that were circulated in different newspapers and magazines against the Congress and Khudai Khidmatgars during the civil disobedience and Quit India Movement which were considered as anti Islam.<sup>11</sup> During the elections his stated *Fatwa* inviting the people to vote for the League says that, “from the stand point of view of the ‘*shariat*’ there is one path for a Muslim and that is to caste his vote in favor of candidate selected by the Muslim League. To cast a vote for the Congress or any other party is treachery against the religion of Islam and contrary to the unanimous decision of the *Ulema*.”<sup>12</sup> Besides, the British political officers were using every tactic for ensuring victory of the Muslim League in the elections.<sup>13</sup> All the energies of *Pirs*, religious leaders and the Khan Bahadurs were

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<sup>9</sup> Fazal Zaman Shalman, *Moulvi Fazal Mehmood Makhfi*, (Peshawar: Aamir Print and Publishers, 2017), 133

<sup>10</sup> Ibid; 134

<sup>11</sup> Abdul Akbar Khan, *Da Bar-i- Sagheer Pak Wo Hind Pa Azady key Da Pukhtano Barkha*, (Peshawar: University Publishers, 2009), 301 Abdul Akbar Khan was a close associate of Ghaffar Khan and president of the *Anjuman-i-Islah-ul- Afaghna* (society for reformation of the Afghans). He has authored different books in Pashto language about the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement and history of the Pakhtuns.

<sup>12</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 100

<sup>13</sup> Khan Abdul Wali Khan, *The Struggle and the Aftermath*, Vol. 1, (Peshawar: Bacha Khan Trust Research Center, 2011), 203 Abdul Wali Khan was the eldest son of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and an active Khudai Khidmatgar. After the creation of Pakistan, he became a prominent nationalist politician fighting for the rights of the Pakhtuns and was kept behind bars for several years. Apart from active politics in Pakistan, he has written four volumes on the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement in Pashto language based on the record kept at the British library in London, local record and his personal experiences. The first volume of his book has been translated into English in 2011 by Bacha Khan Trust. His other book entitled “*Rikhtya Rikhtya Dhee*” about the creation of Pakistan has also been translated into English as “Facts are Facts” and also in Urdu as, “Haqaiq Haqiaq Hain”. He died in 2006 and was buried in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan



directed towards promoting the cause of the Muslim League for getting Pakistan.<sup>14</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan also criticized the British authorities for favoring the Muslim League and the Islamia College, Peshawar was closed for campaigning in the elections.<sup>15</sup>

The Congress leaders and workers were also not sitting idle to the religious propaganda during the elections. They tried their best to expose the League leaders by pointing to the previous appointed Muslim League ministry from 1943 to 1945. Moreover, they have been criticizing the religious credentials of the pro British *Khans* and pro Muslim League *Ulema* and questioning their *fatwas*. Abdul Ghaffar himself had started tour of the province a month before the elections refraining people from any kind of violence and keeping unity among their ranks. The Muslim League leaders accused the Frontier Congress ministers of using official resources for winning the elections as they were distributing money, clothes, grain and other amenities. However, the fact is that Congress being in office did not enjoy any advantage during the elections and was facing a hostile bureaucracy and aggressive Muslim League.<sup>16</sup> Cunningham also rejected these claims as excuses as most of the Muslim officials in the superior positions were favoring Muslim League over the Congress. However, majority of the people in the North West Frontier remained with the Congress till the end.<sup>17</sup>

The results of the elections, held from 26<sup>th</sup> January to 14<sup>th</sup> February, went in favor of the Congress or the Khudai Khidmatgars which secured 30 out of 50 seats in the assembly and over twenty percent of the population was registered to vote. According to George Cunningham, the slogan of Islam in danger and Hindu domination in the Frontier was simply laughable as the

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid; 204

<sup>15</sup> Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, 101

<sup>16</sup> Ibid;

<sup>17</sup> Aijaz Ahmad, "Frontier Gandhi: Reflections on Muslim Nationalism in India". *Social Scientist*, Vol No. 33, (Jan 2005), 24



NWFP was a Muslim majority province with a tiny Hindu minority. However, unlike the elections of 1937 where the League was unable to issue ticket to a single candidate, it succeeded in capturing seventeen seats in the elections of 1946 out of thirty eight Muslims seats. However, the League did well in securing the non Pakhtun Muslims in the district of Hazara where 8 out of 9 seats went to the Muslim League.<sup>18</sup> The Jamiat-i- Ulema-i- Hind won two and Akali Dal one seat and Congress won 30 seats for forming a new ministry under Dr. Khan Sahib.<sup>19</sup> The Khduai Khidmatgars won eleven out of the twelve minority seats and nineteen out of the twenty seven seats it contested.<sup>20</sup>

While the Muslim League succeeded in securing clear majority of the Muslim electorate in India, the Muslims of NWFP supported the Congress. The ideology of religious communalism did not work in the Frontier where the Pakhtuns being an integral part of the Muslim community and Islam as their way of life was overshadowed by their ethnic distinctiveness.<sup>21</sup> The Pakhtuns of the Frontier gave more importance to their differences with other Muslims than their common faith in defining them as separate ethnic group. Giving support to secular Congress over the Muslim League which spoke in a religious idiom is a clear example of their ethnic specification and sensitivity.

The aggressive attitude of the Muslim leaguers and *fatwas* issued by the religious leaders in the Frontier against the provincial Congress and Khudai Khimdatgars continued even after the elections. In response to Pakistan Conference at Shahi Bagh on 21 April 1946 organized by the provincial Muslim League, the provincial Congress held a meeting at Shahi Bagh on the eve of

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<sup>18</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 102

<sup>19</sup> Wali Khan, *The Struggle and the Aftermath*, 204

<sup>20</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 201

<sup>21</sup> Stephen Alan Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement in India's North- West Frontier, 1901- 1947", Unpublished PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Political Science, (University of Columbia, 1977), 3



commemorating the martyrs day of 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1930 which was attended by more than thousand persons along with Chief Minister Dr. Khan Sahb and other ministers.<sup>22</sup> Due to the presence of Abdul Ghaffar Khan at Delhi, his son Abdul Ghani Khani who represented the province in the central legislature presided over the meeting. They criticized the religious *fatwa* (verdict) of Pir Jumat Ali Shah, the president of the Pakistan conference that those who had joined the Congress were not true Muslims. Abdul Qayum Swati, the parliamentary secretary of the Congress mentioned the Muslim Leaguers as *khairat Khors* (baggars) and added that they have no knowledge of Islam which was a very broadminded religion. He went on and declared that it was not their *Fatwa* but a verdict of their British masters who had previously declared the Afghan monarch Amanullah Khan as *Kafir* (infidel).<sup>23</sup> The Chief Minister Dr. Khan Sahib also addressed the gathering and warned the people to be indifferent to the *fatwas* and abuses of the Leaguers. He also addressed the Afridis, Mohmands, Wazirs and Shinwaris and assured that they would not be forgotten after independence.<sup>24</sup> He also informed them that he had received messages from the Afridi, Shinwari and Mohmand tribes about their support for the Congress and that only the thugs were flirting with the British for the sake of money.<sup>25</sup> It was only during the communal riots of 1946- 47 in Northern India that caused them to rethink about their loyalties.<sup>26</sup>

## **6.2 The Cabinet Mission and Formation of the interim Government**

While results of the elections were announced on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1946, the British government announced sending of a delegation comprised of cabinet ministers on 19<sup>th</sup> who reached India on

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<sup>22</sup> Peshawar Archives, "IPS Diary", Bundle No. 39, Serial No. 633,

<sup>23</sup> Ibid;

<sup>24</sup> Ibid;

<sup>25</sup> Ibid;

<sup>26</sup> Rittenberg, "The Independence Movement, 3



24<sup>th</sup> March for solution to the Indian political problem. The British Prime Minister Mr. Atlee just before dispatch of the delegation announced that:

“Our colleagues are going to India in order to ascertain and help India get her freedom as soon as possible. It’s up to India what sort of government is to replace the present regime. We desire to help her in setting up the machinery for making a decision in that direction. If she elects to independence, she has the right to do so. It will be for us to help India in the transition in a smooth possible way.”<sup>27</sup>

The mission consisted of the Secretary of State for India, Lord Lawrence, A.V. Alexander and Sir Stafford Cripps who started extensive negotiations with the leaders of the Indian political leaders held at Simla from 5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> May 1946 but the deliberations remained inconclusive as the Muslim League demanded division of India on the basis of religion while the Congress did not agree as it could not accept the League as sole representative body of all the Indian Muslims. On 16<sup>th</sup> May, the mission however, presented its own plan that cleared the way for forming an interim government and the future constitution for India. According to the plan, the Indian provinces were divided into three groups A, B and C on communal lines. Group A comprised of Bombay, Madras, Central Provinces, Orissa, United Provinces and Bihar. Group B was to be made of Punjab, Sindh and the NWFP. Group C would be consisted of Bengal and Assam. As a short term solution, an interim government of all the political parties was sought with elections for the constituent assembly and as long term solution, the plan called for a decentralized center authorized to deal with foreign affairs, defense and communications and the provinces were to be autonomous.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the central assembly was required to have the support of majority of the Hindu and Muslim representatives regarding any legislation having communal

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<sup>27</sup> Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, 104

<sup>28</sup> Ibid;



implications.<sup>29</sup> The provinces were given autonomy in the sense that they could frame groups with executives and legislatures and every group of provinces would determine the provincial subjects to be taken in common. The aim of the mission was to give complete assurance to the minorities that their legitimate rights and satisfy demands of the League.<sup>30</sup> The plan was accepted by both the Congress and Muslim League though with certain reservations. The Muslim League accepted it as the provinces had the chance in future to withdraw from the union and the Congress unwillingly accepted it for keeping unity of the India as a federation. The Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars of the Frontier did not like the compulsory grouping of the provinces as there was Congress ministry in the NWFP who wanted to be separate province in union with India. Abdul Ghaffar Khan on 21<sup>st</sup> May told the press that:

“Great stress was laid by the Muslim League on self determination and autonomy. While the Congress agreed to the fullest autonomy, the Muslim League is cautious and stands for compulsion of provinces joining groups. Surely, this is also negation of the self determination. Provinces must cooperate with each other of course but this must be done with their own free will.”<sup>31</sup>

The Congress despite internal differences accepted it unwillingly for the sake of India. However, Nehru held a press Conference on 10<sup>th</sup> July in Bombay stating that the Congress had accepted the plan only to participate in the Constituent assembly and it would be free to change or modify the plan as it thought best.<sup>32</sup> M.A. Jinnah immediately reacted to the statement issued by the Congress president and demanded review of the decision made by the Muslim League as he had earlier been promising the Indian Muslims a separate Muslim state of their own. However, the cabinet mission had made it clear that they could not recommend division of India and that is

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<sup>29</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 201

<sup>30</sup> Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, 156

<sup>31</sup> Rittenberg, Stephen Alan. *Ethnicity, Nationalism*, 205

<sup>32</sup> Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, 164



why he had accepted it as the best solution the Muslim League could secure at the time. The Muslim League council met in Bombay on 27<sup>th</sup> July and demanded Pakistan as the only course left with it by passing a resolution of rejecting the Cabinet Mission Plan.<sup>33</sup> M.A. Jinnah stated in the council that “this day we bid goodbye to constitutional methods.....Today, we have also forged a pistol and are in a position to use it.”<sup>34</sup> Nehru met Jinnah on 15<sup>th</sup> August but without any result. During the Muslim League meeting Jinnah was authorized to take any step he liked and he declared 16<sup>th</sup> August as a “Direct Action Day” and the Bengal government declared the day as public holiday. According to Wavell, the Communal riots that erupted in Calcutta left five to ten thousand people dead and thousands other wounded. The great Calcutta killings spread to Bombay in September, Noakhali in October, Bihar and the United Provinces in October where hundreds of Hindus and Muslims were killing each other.

The Cabinet Mission left for England and left Wavell to keep continue efforts for formation of the interim government. The Viceroy invited the Congress for forming the government since the League had already rejected the plan and the government. The new government was sworn in on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1946 while the communal riots had not stopped. The Viceroy wrote to the Secretary of States for India, Lord Pethick Lawrence about the communal violence saying that:

“everything is overshadowed by communal violence in East Bengal, Bihar and the UP... the Muslims are to blame for their policy of direct action where the casualties from Hindu and Muslim sides are 50:50.....and so far as the number of killings are concerned, I do not know the exact

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid; 165

<sup>34</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 210



number in Bihar. Jinnah put the number at 30,000. Nazimuddin put in from 10 to 20 thousands and my own guess is 5 to 10 thousands.”<sup>35</sup>

A League committee of action was formed in the Frontier province under the leadership of Pir of Manki Sharif for leading the “Direct Action Day” campaign. The Frontier Muslim League made it sure that the killing of the Muslims in Bengal received complete publicity in the Frontier and the province was flooded with stories of the Hindu brutalities and atrocities over the Muslims.<sup>36</sup> Even before the communal violence had happened, the Pir of Manki Sharif visited the province extensively including the tribal areas propagating the cause of Pakistan. Public meetings were arranged in Peshawar in early April 1946 under the *Jamiat-i- Asfia* of Pir of Manki. Due to its success, the southern districts of Bannu, Kohat and D.I. Khan adjoining the Frontier tribes were covered in May, June and November respectively passing resolutions against the Frontier Congress ministry and in support of Pakistan. The propaganda was to stress the people that the Hindus were bent upon destroying not only the Muslim culture and civilization but physically exterminating the Muslims from India.<sup>37</sup> Descriptions of the communal happenings in Bihar and Bombay were sent to the Muslim League’s newspapers in the NWFP for arousing the ethnic honor of the Pakhtuns.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, large numbers of Pakhtuns were residing in Bombay and working as labourers whose accounts of killings were also published in the newspapers and magazines. For instance, *Al- Jamiat Sarhad* wrote an account of happenings stating that “Although the Pakhtuns in Bombay did not take part in the Hindu- Muslim riots on 1<sup>st</sup> September, great numbers of them were killed. The police were helping the Hindus in killing the

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<sup>35</sup> Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, 109

<sup>36</sup> Ibid;

<sup>37</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity*, 211

<sup>38</sup> Ibid;



Pakhtuns in factories, villages and on the main streets.”<sup>39</sup> In fact the communal violence had started in India. The Muslims would ignite the flame and the Hindus would pour oil on it. However, the NWFP was calm and had not public communal feelings against the minorities.

### **6.3 Nehru’s Visit to the NWFP and the Frontier Tribes**

Amid communal riots, the Viceroy invited the Congress and an interim government of Congress was formed on 2<sup>nd</sup> September which was considered as double betrayal of the British by the Muslim League. However, the Viceroy felt that the situation will deteriorate without the participation of the Muslim League and invited Jinnah to join the government. Upon meeting the Viceroy, M.A. Jinnah also realized that it was fatal for the Muslim interests to leave the entire administration of the central government to the Congress and it joined the interim set up on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1946. While the League joined the interim government, Nehru thought that both the political parties could work in coordination. However, the Muslim League worked and propagated for achieving Pakistan particularly in the NWFP which was a Muslim majority province having a Congress government. Nehru and Frontier Congress were worried about the extensive use of religious propaganda by the Muslim League on the one hand and the British bombing of the Mehsud tribes in South Waziristan on the other which was presented by the League as ordered by the Congress government.

After becoming Vice President of the Viceroy’s Executive council and having a Congress ministry in the Frontier, Nehru made up his mind for undertaking an official tour of the NWFP and the Frontier tribes. The tour was arranged in the backdrop of military operation going on against Mehsud tribes in South Waziristan on the orders of the political department of India that had again increased the tribal raids in the settled districts creating law and order situation for the

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid;



Frontier Congress ministry by the end of August. On 7<sup>th</sup> September, Abdul Ghaffar Khan stated that mass aerial bombing had been going on in Waziristan for the past few months that was bound to create difficulties for the new central government in Delhi and the provincial government of Dr. Khan Sahib in the Frontier. Olaf Caroe, who had replaced Cunningham as Governor in March 1946 and had remained an anti Khudai Khidmatgar Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar during the 1930s rejected the claim of Abdul Ghaffar Khan published in the *Tribune* and the *Associated Press* that there was any mass bombardment or wholesale slaughter of the people but only selected villages of the offenders. The bombing had started as a result of kidnapping a British political agent, Major Donald by the Shabi Khel Mehsud tribe on 21<sup>st</sup> June 1946 thereby inviting British bombing.<sup>40</sup> Although, the political agent was treated hospitably and released within ten days after paying ransom of Rs 110,000 but the government decided to punish the Shahbi Khel tribe by taking action against their villages.<sup>41</sup> The Viceroy, Lord Wavell was in favor of pacification of the tribes at that critical Indian situation as the Faqir of Ipi was also active against the British and there were 160 cases of sniping in Waziristan in 1946.<sup>42</sup> The new governor Caroe unilaterally thought it necessary and held a conference with the army northern high command at Rawalpindi on 23<sup>rd</sup> July for starting the bombing. On 23<sup>rd</sup> August, the governor reported that the bombing had inflicted a lot of damages on the troubled tribe and supported attacking some more villages for reaching out a favorable settlement since the tribes were not ready for accepting the terms and fines imposed against taking the law into their hands.<sup>43</sup> After taking leave for few days, Major Donald was reposted again in the Waziristan on his own request but later shot himself dead on 25<sup>th</sup> September. Rumors in the official circles

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<sup>40</sup> Parshotam Mehra, *The North West Frontier Drama: 1945- 1947*, (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 1998), 66

<sup>41</sup> Alan Warren, *Waziristan: the Faqir of Ipi and the Indian Army the North-West Frontier Revolt of 1936-37*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 259

<sup>42</sup> Ibid; 258

<sup>43</sup> Mehra, *The North West Frontier Drama*, 67



circulated that he had promised the Mehsud tribe that he will prevent the government from taking punitive action them but failed to do so.<sup>44</sup>

Nehru ordered stopping the bombing of the tribal area since it was propagated by the Muslim League in the Frontier that Hindus had ordered the bombings that were also allegedly responsible for the atrocities against Muslims in Bihar and their co- religionists, the Khan Brothers were supporters of the Hindus.<sup>45</sup> Some of the Congress leaders including Maulana Abul Kalam Azad advised Nehru that the time was not suitable for him to visit the NWFP and the Frontier Tribes looking at the communal situation in India and the Muslim League propaganda in the Frontier.<sup>46</sup> However, Nehru was adamant on visiting the Frontier and did not listen to any one. Nehru's visit of the Frontier was not the first one as he had earlier visited the province in October 1937 and in January 1938. On both the occasions, he was received by the people enthusiastically and he had visited all the political centers including the historic Khyber Pass where the Afridis honored him spreading red carpets in his way on the road. Explaining his impressions to the Socialist Congress about the visit of the Frontier in October 1937, Nehru said that, "One thing is very apparent in the Frontier that is the absence of what is known as the communal spirit in the rest of India. Even in matters of religion, though the Pathans are religious in a broad sense, they are far removed from bigotry. Their customs also afford a pleasant contrast to the customs prevailing in other parts of India. For instance, *Purdah* is not very prevalent except in the cities and the further away one goes the less of it there is. There was a regular corps of Pathan volunteers among the Khudai Khidmatgars. In the tribal areas, I am told there is no *purdah* at all."<sup>47</sup> During his visit of Kohat in January 1938, three hundred riflemen had surrounded him and the Afridis had kept

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<sup>44</sup> Warren, *Waziristan*, 259

<sup>45</sup> Mehra, *The North West Frontier*, 68-69

<sup>46</sup> Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, 181

<sup>47</sup> D/G. Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan: Faith is a Battle*, (New Delhi: Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1967), 222



beacon fires burning at several points on the hill tops all through the night which could be seen from miles around.<sup>48</sup> However, his third and last visit to the Frontier was completely in contrast to his previous visits.

His tour of the Frontier in October 1946 was considered as unwelcomed by the British authorities as well as the Muslim League leaders that proved disastrous not only for the Congress but the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier. Sir Olaf Caroe, resented his proposed visit as far as 29<sup>th</sup> September and dubbed it as a deliberate partisan approach of the tribal problem. The governor feared that he may not be able to discharge his responsibility of maintaining tranquility of the border.<sup>49</sup> For convincing the Viceroy Lord Wavell, the governor flew to Delhi in order to stop Nehru from visiting the province and the Frontier tribes. However, Lord Wavell replied that being in charge of the External Affairs and responsible for the tribal matters, Nehru could not be prevented from his visit. The Viceroy however tried to send a Muslim League member along side Nehru and also wrote to the leader of the Muslim League, M.A. Jinnah to desist from inviting the League workers for staging demonstrations during the visit as the later had joined the Interim government in the aftermath of the communal killings at Bihar on 16<sup>th</sup> August that had taken thousands of human lives. In reply, M.A. Jinnah wrote back to the Viceroy stating that, "I received your letter of 15<sup>th</sup> October at the time when I was just leaving for the meeting of Muslim League's Working Committee regarding Pandit Nehru's proposed visit tomorrow and after consulting the committee I beg to inform you that the Pathans of the Frontier look upon his visit with disfavor and it is advisable to postpone it to a later date and that no instructions for staging demonstrations had been issued."<sup>50</sup> However, Jinnah seemed to have issued such

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<sup>48</sup> Mehra, *The North West Frontier*, 69

<sup>49</sup> Ibid;

<sup>50</sup> Shah, *Muslim League in NWFP*, 116



instructions as the Pir of Manki Sharif wrote to the former that he was personally against any demonstration but Jinnah's approval had made him satisfied.<sup>51</sup> The Muslim League issued a press release saying that, "the Frontier people have never accepted the British rule. They will not submit to the Hindu *Raj* either. If Nehru is bent upon meeting them, he should bring Islam Bibi (a Hindu convert girl) along with himself. Without Islam Bibi, neither the Faqir of Ipi nor any other tribesmen would come to meet him."<sup>52</sup>

Upon his arrival at Peshawar on 16<sup>th</sup> October, he met with several thousand protesters including one thousand Muslim League guards in green uniforms with lances, staves and spears in their hands headed by Abdul Qaiyyum who was later appointed chief minister of the province by M.A. Jinnah after creation of Pakistan and declared the Khudai Khidmatgar Organization as illegal. When Nehru emerged at the airport, hostile slogans were raised by the Muslim League demonstrators. When Abdul Qaiyyum was asked why had they demonstrated when the Muslim League had already joined the government? His reply was that there will be no peace in the Frontier even if there was peace elsewhere in India.<sup>53</sup> The police had to slip Nehru by back way. The Congress and Khudai Khidmatgars had on the other hand stopped its workers to greet Nehru for avoiding any clash with the Muslim Leaguers.

Next morning, Abdul Ghaffar Khan along with Nehru started their tour of Waziristan. They visited Miranshah, Razmak, Tank, Jandola, the Khyber Agency, Malakand from 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> October and faced demonstrators waiving black flags, anti Congress attitude and stoning snips with the exception of Jandola where he along with Khan Brothers was welcomed and treated warmly. On reaching to the headquarters of North Waziristan, Miranshah, Nehru was introduced

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid;

<sup>52</sup> Fakhr- ul Islam, *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: A Political History: 1901-1955*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2014), 64

<sup>53</sup> Ibid;117



to the tribal *jirga* by Dr. Khan Sahib and Abdul Ghaffar Khan. The Wazir tribal *maliks* asked about Nehru's mission to Waziristan. Some shouted that we do not want Hindu *Raj*. They made it clear that the people of Waziristan would not tolerate any interference with their freedom. They neither recognized the Congress nor the Muslim League and that should they be left alone to live their lives as they thought best for themselves.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, on reaching Razmak and landing the plane, Nehru and the Khan Brothers met with more hostile reception from the Mehsud *maliks* telling Nehru that if they had any grievances, they would turn to M.A. Jinnah rather than the Congress. The tribal *maliks* were even paid by the Muslim League supporters to snip the official plane at the time of landing and in the *jirga*, the Hindu politician was abused violently.<sup>55</sup> Haji Mehar Dil Khan Mehsud physically tried to assault Nehru.<sup>56</sup> The chief minister Dr. Khan Sahib asserted that the *jirgas* were hand picked by the political officers. Nehru turned to the representatives of the political department and asked the *Jirga* members, are these petty pensioners you are afraid of? Replying to the *maliks* who intervened that we are free people and do not want to lose our sovereignty, Nehru remarked that I am amazed how you people who get government money and act as they like, talk of freedom.<sup>57</sup> It should be noted that these *maliks* were selected by the political agents and receiving regular allowances for their services to the colonial authorities. The general population did not have any role in their dealings with the political agents. Furthermore, the common people have had no right to vote as far as the 1990s after the creation of Pakistan in 1947.

The same hostile attitude was shown to Nehru and the Khan Brothers at their visit of Wana, the headquarters of South Waziristan and Tank where demonstrations were staged by the pro British

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<sup>54</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 386

<sup>55</sup> Warren, *Waziristan*, 259

<sup>56</sup> S. Iftikhar Husain, *Some Major Pakhtun Tribes along the Pak-Afghan Border*, (Peshawar: Area Study Centre, 2000), 36

<sup>57</sup> Tendulkar, 387



tribal *maliks*. In Jandola where the political agent was a Hindu named Diwan Shivsaran Lal, the tribesmen men received them warmly and presented them with a goat according to the their tribal custom. On 20<sup>th</sup> October, Nehru and the Khan Brothers left for Khyber agency and were sniped by the tribesmen near Torkham. On their way to Landi Kotal, stones were thrown at their cars in the presence of political agent, Sahibzada Khurshid and an Englishman was hit by one of the stones as he got out of the car for taking photos.<sup>58</sup> The next morning, Nehru and the Khan Brothers left for a tour of Malakand Agency where Shaikh Mehbub Ali was the Political Agent who had already met Governor Caroe regarding the tour. Shaikh Mehbub Ali had played a key role in propaganda and rebellion against the deposed Afghan King Amanullah Khan and also involved in the communal violence against the Hindus in D.I. Khan as he was then serving as the Deputy Commissioner there. He could go to any extent for pleasing his British masters.<sup>59</sup> The Khudai Khidmatgars in the agency informed Abdul Ghaffar Khan at night through their leader Rahat Khan in Malakand to take steps for their safety as they had reached there before the scheduled time due to the fear of facing any mischief by the paid agents of political agent in their way. Next morning, a Khudai Khidmatgar informed that the political agent had gathered a large number of people for protest and mischief. Abdul Ghaffar Khan writes that, “as we were to start our journey to Dargai and sat in our cars, people who had gathered near the fort started throwing stones at us.”<sup>60</sup> They had blocked the road with a truck. Dr, Khan Sahib snatched a revolver from a nearby person and threatened the crowd with shooting.<sup>61</sup> The glasses of their cars were broken down and this happened with the chief minister of the province, Dr. Khan Sahib and Nehru, the

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<sup>58</sup> Khan Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand au Jaddo Jehad*, (Peshawar, nd), 567

<sup>59</sup> Ibid;

<sup>60</sup> Ibid; 569

<sup>61</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 388



head of the external affairs department responsible for the affairs of the tribal area in the presence of the British political authorities.

After going down from Malakand, another hostile crowd was waiting for Nehru and the Khan Brothers at Dargai and the political agent was also standing silently there. Here the crowd also started throwing stones at us and the political agent was watching the scene. A man from a short distance threw stone at Nehru but Abdul Ghaffar Khan save him by pushing himself before the heavy stone thereby wounding the later.<sup>62</sup> Dr, Khan's head and body was covered with filth thrown at them. The treatment meted out to them was result of the conspiracy of the political agent, Shaikh Mehbub Ali and the Governor Caroe. Pandit Nehru also held the political agent responsible for the happenings at Malakand agency and wrote to governor Caroe stating that, "we had already been informed that a group of persons was waiting for them to be stoned and the political agent was standing silently doing nothing to stop the crowd from attacking us. The men surrounded our car, smashed all the glasses and made a murderous attack upon us. The political agent calmly preceded leaving us completely at the mercy of the crowd. The sight of just one revolver without any firing was sufficient for frightening the crowd for dispersing which shows how easy it was to deal with them". Nehru demanded enquiry for misbehavior of the political agent.<sup>63</sup> According to Caroe, the demonstrations in Malakand and Khyber were organized by the Muslim League.<sup>64</sup> The political agent was later retired on the suggestion of Lord Wavell after Justice R. Clark charged him with negligence from his duty in January 1947. Moreover, the governor, Olaf Caroe was also part of the conspiracy against the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars due to their struggle against the British as he had also served as Deputy

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid; 389

<sup>63</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 120

<sup>64</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity*, 213



Commissioner of the Peshawar. Upon strong criticism by the Congress and the Khan Brothers, he was replaced with Lieutenant General Lockhart as acting governor in June 1947 as he was accused of continuously taking sides with the Muslim League instead of the elected government.<sup>65</sup>

After returning from Malakand agency, Nehru and the Khan Brothers were welcomed all along from Peshawar to Sar-i- Daryab by hundreds of Khudai Khidmatgars as Abdul Ghaffar Khan refused to accept security arrangement by the police and the army. The followers of pro Muslim League Pir of Manki Sharif tried to attack their party. However, they could not do so due to presence of large number of Khudai Khidmatgars as well as armed villagers who were sympathetic with the former as they had come to know about the treatment meted out to Nehru and Khan Brothers at Malakand. The Muslim League followers were threatened that their violence will meet with violence. The Khudai Khidmatgars held a successful gathering of some twenty five thousand people where leaders of different tribes were also present and greeted Nehru.<sup>66</sup> However, his visit to the tribal area at that critical time was ill- advised.<sup>67</sup> The tour was undertaken at a time where communal propaganda in the Frontier was high and instead of boosting the Congress went in favor of the Muslim League. Moreover, the common tribesmen in the tribal area did not have the right to vote or participate in elections and the official tribal *maliks* were working on the directions of the British authorities who could not wish the tour as a success as they consider the Muslim Leaguers as their friends.

The Khan Brothers were never allowed to enter the tribal area and when they got a chance; their tour was sabotaged by the British political officers in collabouration with the pro- Muslim

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<sup>65</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism*, 172-182

<sup>66</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 389

<sup>67</sup> Ahmad, "Frontier Gandhi", 23



League leaders. The ultimate result was that the tribal *maliks* later on assured their loyalty to the new state of Pakistan. Without the interference of the British officers and exploitation of the religious feelings by the Muslim League, they might have opted either for being part of the referendum or keeping a separate status of their own along with having brotherly relations with the new country. It is also evident from the visit of some of the Afridi tribal elders who visited the governor even before the announcement of the Partition plan on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1947. In March 1947, a party of Afridi *maliks* visited Governor Olaf Caroe at the government house. They talked on behalf of the 275, 000 Afridis who lived around the Khybar Pass and made clear their position which was also covered by the *New York Times*. The tribal elders said that, “we would not deal with the Congress. We would not deal with the Muslim League. We may deal with a government representing both the sides. We own the Khyber and will bargain on that basis”.<sup>68</sup> At the time of creation of Pakistan, the pro British tribal *maliks* assured their loyalty to Pakistan not because of their love for Islam or the new state rather prolonging their own status as representatives of the people and receiving allowances given by the British regularly which were also assured by the M.A. Jinnah. Resultantly, the tribesmen have been suffered for long contrary to the wishes and struggle of the Khudai Khidmatgars that the tribesmen should come out of tribalism, *maliki* system and be united and at par with the rest of the their fellow Pakhtuns in the settled districts.

#### **6.4 Civil Disobedience Movement of Muslim League in the Frontier**

By the start of 1947, the Muslim League influence had gained momentum and started a civil disobedience movement against the Frontier Congress ministry. The large scale communal violence going on in Northern India affected the people and politics in the NWFP.<sup>69</sup> According to a secret intelligence report on 17 October 1946, the Muslim Leaguers were bent upon creating

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<sup>68</sup> J. W Spain, *The Way of the Pathans*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1962), 53

<sup>69</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999), xxix



communal differences in Peshawar to avenge the treatment meted out to the Muslims in Calcutta and Bombay and trying to have a clash with the police in order to hold the provincial government responsible.<sup>70</sup> In December 1946, the situation started deteriorating. On 7<sup>th</sup> December, the political situation in the province was changing rapidly in favor of the Indian Muslims and the Muslim League took the leading role in directing the public opinion in the Frontier. Communal tensions reached parts of the NWFP in district Hazara and D.I. Khan where the Muslim League had succeeded in gaining eight out of nine Muslim seats in the elections. In the first week of December, a tribal *Lashkar* attacked Battal and Oghi villages in district Hazara and its bazars were burnt down.<sup>71</sup> A lorry shifting Hindus from the same area was attacked that killed fourteen people and twenty seven wounded including women and children.<sup>72</sup> These events were instigated and well organized by the *mullahs* in revenge for events in Bihar.<sup>73</sup>

In order to save the province from the spread of communal violence against the minorities, the Frontier Congress took strong measures in district Hazara. Heavy fine was imposed on the tribes of the Black mountain near the district along with number of rifles and surrender of men as guarantee for good behavior in the future.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, the government imposed section 144 and “Hazara Safety Ordinance” was promulgated that led the “War Committee” of the Muslim League headed by the Pir of Manki Sharif to prepare ‘*Mujahideen*’ for civil disobedience against the Frontier Congress ministry.<sup>75</sup> Containing communal violence in the province with having only six percent minorities was of utmost importance for the ministry. According to Tendulkar, “in district Hazara there were nine hundred thousand Muslims. Hindus and Sikhs jointly were

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<sup>70</sup> Peshawar, “IPS Diary”, Bundle No. 39, Serial No. 633

<sup>71</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 131

<sup>72</sup> Farhad Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement in the N.W.F.P: Its Nature and Direction*, (np, nd), 176

<sup>73</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 131

<sup>74</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement in the N.W.F.P*, 176

<sup>75</sup> Ibid;



thirty one thousand. Out of these twenty thousand had already fled the area. There have been loot and arson on a wide scale. Bihar was being avenged in the Frontier.”<sup>76</sup> The numbers of killed were from forty to fifty. However, the Muslim League was exploiting the situation for its political interests. Important members of the Muslim League visited district Hazara telling the common people to defy the orders of the government.<sup>77</sup> At a political gathering of about 1200 persons on 12 January 1947 was held where the provincial Congress leadership held the British responsible for the existing communal tension and criticized its role in supporting the Muslim League.<sup>78</sup>

On the contrary, the Congress ministry in the province was accused of having repressive policy against the Muslims and the League. Prominent member of the Muslim League, Abdul Qaiyum criticizing the provincial government said that, “thousands of Muslims in Bihar were mercilessly butchered and no one ever thought of imposing fines on the Hindus of Bihar or taking military action against them.”<sup>79</sup> Though the tribes complied with orders of fine imposed by the government and no military action was taken against them, the Frontier Muslim League observed 17<sup>th</sup> January as ‘Hazara Day’. Initially, the provincial government did not take any action against the League. In January 1947; an incident took place that led to the arrests of large number of Muslim Leaguers along with their provincial leaders. A pregnant Sikh woman named Basanti was kidnapped, converted to Islam and married to Muhammad Zaman who was one of the killers of twenty non Muslims along with Basanti’s husband in Hazara.<sup>80</sup> In order to resolve the outcry among the Sikh community and to find out the truth, Basanti along with her new husband and her family were brought to the house of Dr.Khan Sahib. After her stay at Dr. Khan Sahib’s

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<sup>76</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 407

<sup>77</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 132

<sup>78</sup> Peshawar, “IPS Diary”, Bundle No. 39, Serial No. 633

<sup>79</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 132

<sup>80</sup> Ibid; 134



house, she stated in front of her husband and her family that she wanted to convert to her own faith Sikhism. She was sent back to Hazara and kept under custody in jail. On 18<sup>th</sup> February, she also told before the city magistrate in Peshawar that she wanted to be sent back to her own people. Rumors were spread that she had accepted Islam out of her own choice and that the chief minister forced her to convert to her own faith. According to The Pakistan Times, the chief minister convinced leaders of the Muslim League, Abdul Qayyum and Muhammad Ali Khan that no force had been used by the premier for reverting Basanti to her own faith.<sup>81</sup> The Muslim League however, distorted the facts for justification of a civil disobedience movement against the ministry over a sensitive matter in the Pakhtun society. Abdul Qayyum arranged demonstrations, organized picketing of courts, blocking the railway lines and stoning the troops when ordered to disperse that led the ministry to arrest him along with other Muslim Leaguers on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1947.<sup>82</sup>

Amid all this violence, Abdul Ghaffar Khan was worried about his co-religionists in Bihar and other areas. He was apprehensive of the communal violence for securing constitutional arrangements which would encourage barbarity and further religious differences rather than solve the political problems.<sup>83</sup> To him, the use of religion for the solution of the constitutional problem was nothing but the use of religion for the justification of violence. Abdul Ghaffar Khan knew that the communal killings on such a vast scale throughout India including some parts of NWFP had strengthened Muslim League's political position in the province.<sup>84</sup> The large scale killings, abductions and rapes in Bihar compelled Abdul Ghaffar Khan to visit the area for preaching non violence and rehabilitating the destitute Muslims and Hindus together with

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid;

<sup>82</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*, 177

<sup>83</sup> Ahmad, "Frontier Gandhi, 30

<sup>84</sup> Ibid; 25



Gandhi. He met the Muslim League leaders, Nazim-ud- Din, Firoz Khan Khan Noon and urged them to play their role in stopping the bloodshed.<sup>85</sup> However, they were calling on the Muslims in rest of India to migrate to Bengal and they did not have the courage to go out of their own cities and help their brothers.<sup>86</sup> When the communal riots reached Multan, Lahore, Amritsar, Gujranwala and Rawalpindi areas of the Punjab province, Abdul Ghaffar Khan was worried and apprehensive of spreading communal violence in his own province.<sup>87</sup>

Abdul Ghaffar Khan accused the Muslim League members for bringing skulls of Muslims from Bihar and instigating violence in the Frontier but they did not succeed as was the case in the rest of Indian provinces.<sup>88</sup> During the budget session of the assembly, supporters of the Muslim League killed twenty Hindus and Sikhs in Peshawar after looting and burning their houses.<sup>89</sup> On receiving cool response from the government officials who were not cooperating with the provincial Congress ministry in protecting the minorities in Peshawar, Abdul Ghaffar Khan ordered *Salar-i- Azam*, Amin Jan to prepare ten thousands uniformed and unarmed Khudai Khidmatgars for protecting Hindus and Sikhs against the Muslim League supporters who were bent upon taking revenge of Indian Muslims in Peshawar.<sup>90</sup> The Khudai Khidmatgars including Abdul Ghaffar Khan were called as *Kafirs* (non believers) for being friends of the Hindus and highly objectionable language was being used in the demonstrations.<sup>91</sup> But the Khudai Khidmatgars strictly adhered to their oath and non violence. In order to deal with the emerging communal situation and humiliation of the Khudai Khidmatgars started by the Muslim League, some of the prominent leaders formed a new organization 'Zalmay Pakhtun' (Young Pakhtun)

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<sup>85</sup> Ghaffar Khan. *Zama Zhwand*, 578

<sup>86</sup> Ibid;

<sup>87</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 406

<sup>88</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 407

<sup>89</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*, 177

<sup>90</sup> Ghaffar Khan, *Zama Zhwand*, 581

<sup>91</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 446



on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1947. Abdul Ghani Khan, the eldest son of Abdul Ghaffar Khan was made the president and its main objective was protecting lives and properties of the minorities and the Khudai Khidmatgars from the armed supporters of the Muslim League with armed resistance.<sup>92</sup> Abdul Ghani, the poet philosopher, politician and president of the *Zalmai Pakhtun* stated that we have gathered twenty five thousand young and armed volunteers and should start a violent struggle against the Muslim League's violent actions. However, Abdul Ghaffar Khan disapproved of any violence and said that, "we will solve our political problems with non violent struggle."<sup>93</sup>

The communal riots in the Punjab following civil disobedience and resignation of the Khizr Hayat's ministry of the Unionist party on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1947 also affected the Frontier and under pressure from the central government. The Muslim League thought of the Punjab's premier resignation as a success and large scale riots followed there. Lord Wavell had already reported to the Secretary of State for India, Lord Lawrence that the fall of Khizr Hayat's ministry will put intolerable strain on Dr. Khan's ministry in the Frontier.<sup>94</sup> In the NWFP, however, Dr. Khan having majority in the assembly and less communal riots unlike the Punjab did not bow down before the Muslim League agitations. Students from the Punjab and Aligarh reached Peshawar to help Muslim League in its activities against the non Muslims in the Frontier.<sup>95</sup> After Peshawar, incidents of communal nature took place in D.I. Khan where more than hundred shops belonging to the minorities were burnt down. One hundred and eighteen people were killed in the rural areas from April 15-25 and the entire population fled to the refugee camp.<sup>96</sup> The Principal, students and staff of Islamia College took active part in demonstrations against the provincial

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<sup>92</sup> Shalman, *Moulvi Fazal Mehmood Makhfi*, 129

<sup>93</sup> Ibid; 130

<sup>94</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 136

<sup>95</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*, 177

<sup>96</sup> Warren, *Waziristan*, 260



government. Major Khurshid, the *Naib Salar-i- Ala* of All India Muslim League National Guards from Punjab had actively been involved in subversive activities and bomb explosions. In a protest in front of the assembly during its session, they deliberately crossed the demarcated line and wanted the troops to open fire which was done killing some followers of the Pir of Manki Sharif. Major Khurshid said that, “the mission is complete. We wanted to shed Muslim blood and it has been done.”<sup>97</sup> Major Khurshid was also organizing an underground movement of young students of ‘Muslim Student Federation and Muslim League’s National guards having wireless transmitters provided to them by the Muslim men the army.<sup>98</sup> However, the Congress government under Dr. Khan Sahib dealt with the Muslim League and its anti- Congress and communal movement in the Frontier. The problem for the British and the Muslim League was the Frontier Congress ministry which could not be force to resign as a legitimate government and Pakistan was incomplete without the Frontier. Meanwhile, Lord Mountbatten replaced Wavell as the new Viceroy of India in order to expedite the process of transferring power to the Indians.

### **6.5 Visit of Lord Mountbatten to the Frontier and the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1947 Plan**

Lord Mountbatten replaced Wavell as a new Viceroy on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1947 started discussions with the political leaders and advance the date for transfer of power from June 1948 to 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947 by announcing his 3<sup>rd</sup> June Plan of partition.<sup>99</sup> Mountbatten held a meeting with the NWFP governor, Olaf Caroe, Liaquat Ali Khan and other staff members at Delhi on 16<sup>th</sup> April for resolving the Frontier problem since it was the major hurdle for reaching any political settlement of the Indian problem. Olaf Caroe asked for fresh elections in the province to decide the fate of the Frontier with the help of the new elected members. The chief secretary, De La Farque

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<sup>97</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*, 178

<sup>98</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 142

<sup>99</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 234



suggested that a free and fair election was more likely to bring the Congress back into the government even if governor's rule was declared.<sup>100</sup> The chief secretary referring to partiality of the governor added that, "though the governor had great knowledge of the province, was biased against the Congress government."<sup>101</sup> Mountbatten responded by saying that the objective of the British government was not to have elections but to make sure a return to normal condition and turning over the province peacefully.<sup>102</sup>

On 18<sup>th</sup> April, the Viceroy held a joint meeting with Caroe, Dr. Khan Sahib and Nehru. Nehru, did not agree with Caroe's suggestion of holding fresh elections as it was demand of the Muslim League and a rebuff to the Congress ministry that was elected recently. A decision for releasing all the prisoners was taken for bringing the situation to normality. Upon reaching Peshawar, Dr. Khan Sahib ordered release of about one thousand prisoners who were not charged with violence. However, this did not bring the situation to normality and the Muslim League demanded resignation of the chief minister and fresh elections in the province. The Viceroy decided to visit the province personally and observe the situation himself and reached Peshawar on 28<sup>th</sup> April. Caroe advised him to visit a huge Muslim League's demonstration of about fifty thousand people a mile away as it would stop the protesters from breaking the law and reaching the government house which shows that it was pre-planned to show the Viceroy strength of the former.<sup>103</sup> Moreover, Feroz and other leaders had already called the Muslim League supporters to show their strength during the visit of the Viceroy.<sup>104</sup> The Viceroy and Dr. Khan Sahib agreed with the governor without wasting time and visited the demonstrators, showed himself without

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<sup>100</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*, 178

<sup>101</sup> Ibid;

<sup>102</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 145

<sup>103</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*, 179

<sup>104</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 148



any address and the Muslim League protesters shouted “Pakistan Zindabad and Mountbatten Zindabad.”<sup>105</sup>

The demonstrators were peaceful as the Viceroy had already asked M.A. Jinnah to either visit the Frontier or make an appeal to the people by press and radio to be peaceful. M.A. Jinnah on 23<sup>rd</sup> April issued a detailed statement talking about the situation in the province and appealed the people to refrain from any kind of violence.<sup>106</sup> The peaceful demonstration strongly impressed Mountbatten. He later met leaders of the Muslim League where six of them were released on parole including Abdul Qayyum, Pir of Manki Sharif and Samin Jan who demanded to impose Governor’s rule and hold fresh elections immediately. Mountbatten replied that, “I could not yield to duress and so long as the Muslim League leaders were trying to overthrow the ministry by violence.”<sup>107</sup> The Viceroy promised that they would receive details of the procedure for transfer of power within two months and that the Muslim League should withdraw from unconstitutional pressure against the present ministry.<sup>108</sup> Mountbatten had adopted the idea of holding fresh elections as he later told M.A. Jinnah that, “I could not be a party to any kind of violence even though it was my unspoken conviction that fresh elections will be necessary in due course.”<sup>109</sup>

After his return from the Frontier, Mountbatten sent his plan of partitioning India to London suggesting fresh elections in the NWFP under the governor. The Viceroy also met M.A. Jinnah and Liaqat Ali Khan on 2<sup>nd</sup> May informing them about the decision in waiting for approval from

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<sup>105</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 212

<sup>106</sup> Ibid; 145

<sup>107</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity*, 238

<sup>108</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, 212

<sup>109</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity*, 237



London and that the elections would be on Hindustan or Pakistan.<sup>110</sup> The Viceroy however, appealed M.A. Jinnah to ask the Frontier League to refrain from the use of force for communal violence and to call off the civil disobedience. The Muslim League central as well as provincial leadership rejected it without an official notification for the elections. M.A. Jinnah has been pressing the Viceroy throughout for dismissing the ministry which was rejected by the Viceroy and he considered it legally and moral wrong.<sup>111</sup> The Central Congress Working and the Frontier Congress rejected Mountbatten Plan for fresh elections in the Frontier saying that it will force them to change their entire attitude towards the British government which made the Viceroy to change his mind in favor of a referendum.<sup>112</sup> The Congress in response to the partition of the Punjab and Bengal had accepted the proposed partition and agreed to holding referendum in the Frontier though the central working committee was divided on the issue. Abdul Ghaffar Khan told the Congress Working Committee that, “the Pakhtuns stood by you with giving great sacrifices for achieving freedom, but you deserted us and thrown us to the wolves.”<sup>113</sup> After accepting the partition of India with division of Punjab and Bengal between the Congress and the Muslim League on communal basis and referendum in the NWFP, the partition plan of 3<sup>rd</sup> June was announced by the government with 15<sup>th</sup> August as the earliest date for transfer of power.

## **6.6 Referendum in the Settled Districts of the NWFP and inclusion of the Frontier Tribes in Pakistan**

On 11<sup>th</sup> June, the provincial Khudai Khidmatgar leadership including Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the ministers held a meeting at Peshawar on the question of referendum and betrayal of the Congress. Different opinions were put forward and urged Abdul Ghaffar Khan to go to Delhi and

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<sup>110</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 213

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, 214

<sup>112</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism*, 239

<sup>113</sup> Ibid; 242



discuss the question of including the option of Pakhtunistan in the referendum instead of India.<sup>114</sup> However, on 14<sup>th</sup> June, the Congress working committee approved the partition plan of 3<sup>rd</sup> June.<sup>115</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan was the only leader of NWFP and member of Congress Working Committee who along with Gandhiji, Rammanohar Lohia and Layaprakash Narayan voted against the partition of India.<sup>116</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan while rejecting the referendum said that, “now when India has disowned us, why should there be a referendum on India and Pakistan? Let it be on the question of joining Pakistan or Pakhtunistan.”<sup>117</sup> Nehru had agreed to hold a referendum in the NWFP without consulting the Khudai Khidmatgars who had won the elections of 1946 as all other ministries in the provinces were to remain in place.<sup>118</sup> Nehru, during his visit to the NWFP in 1937 had told a large gathering of the Khudai Khidmatgars that, “the Pakhtuns should not call Abdul Ghaffar Khan as *Fakhr-i- Afghan* (pride of the Afghans) rather call him as *Fakhr-i- Hind* (pride of India).<sup>119</sup> Nehru had threatened the Viceroy that in case of dismissal of the Frontier ministry, the Congress would change its entire attitude towards the British government as dismissing the Frontier Congress government was a one side demand of the Muslim League. Similarly, he could have consulted the Frontier Congress leaders including Abdul Ghaffar Khan before accepting partition and referendum in the NWFP. In fact, the Congress could not see an independent Pakhtunistan as it could also compel the British and Muslim League to hand over whole of the Punjab and Bengal to the Muslim League which was not acceptable to the Congress leadership. According to Mountbatten when he was asked by the Frontier chief minister Dr. Khan Sahib on 5<sup>th</sup> June to include a third option of Pakhtunistan in the

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<sup>114</sup> Akbar Khan, *Da Bar-i- Sagheer Pak Wo Hind Pa Azady*, 288

<sup>115</sup> Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *North-West Frontier Province: History and Politics*, (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 2007), 217

<sup>116</sup> Ahmad, “Frontier Gandhi”, 24

<sup>117</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2016, p. 242.

<sup>118</sup> Ahmad Aijaz, “Frontier Gandhi”, 25

<sup>119</sup> Shalman, *Moulvi Fazal Mehmood Makhfi*, 128



referendum, he said that the third option of independence for provinces was removed on the suggestion of the Indian National Congress.<sup>120</sup>

The logic behind accepting the partition of India by Nehru and the Congress central leadership was that they did not want Balkanization of India by recognizing an independent Pakhtun state as it was suggested by Abdul Ghaffar Khan that if referendum was necessary, it should be on the question of Pakistan and Pakhtunistan.<sup>121</sup> Ghaffar Khan put forward the option of Pakhtunistan to the Viceroy in a meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> June in the presence of Gandhi and M.A. Jinnah with no positive result.<sup>122</sup> The Khudai Khidmatgars and the Pakhtuns had always worked for protecting their autonomous character with self rule within the framework of united India. In case of division of the India, the Pakhtuns would never vote in favor of joining India. If an independent Pakhtunistan was not acceptable to the British then holding of referendum and giving the option of joining India was nothing more than inclusion of the NWFP in to the new state. Disappointed by the Congress, the British and the Muslim League, Abdul Ghaffar Khan advised the Khudai Khidmatgars to boycott the referendum peacefully as a protest but agreeing to the partition of India with referendum in the Frontier was a political defeat to the Indian National Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier. According to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Congress deserted us and it is my conviction that if the Congress lent us support in supporting our demand for Pakhtunistan as it did in case of Gurdaspur, Jinnah could have been compelled to accept our demand.<sup>123</sup>

The referendum was to take place on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1947. Undertaking the referendum was entrusted to the British army officers with administrative as well as police duties supported by 17000

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid;

<sup>121</sup> Ibid; 134

<sup>122</sup> Jan, *Khudai Khidmatgar Movement*, 180

<sup>123</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 447



soldiers under a special ordinance.<sup>124</sup> Due to strong criticism of the Frontier Congress and Nehru of governor Caroe for being supporter of the Muslim League, Mountbatten forced him to take leave and replaced him with Lieutenant General Lockhart as an acting governor from 26<sup>th</sup> June to 13<sup>th</sup> August 1947.<sup>125</sup> The result of the referendum was officially announced on 20<sup>th</sup> July in which 572798 people were given the right to vote. Out of this, 289244 votes were casted in favour of Pakistan and 2874 votes in favor of joining India while 286370 did not cast their votes. Out of the total votes of the electorate in the province, 50.49 percent casted their votes for joining Pakistan. Being one sided affair, the Muslim League had no hurdle to cross.<sup>126</sup> According to Abdul Wali Khan, senior Muslim League leaders accepted to him decades later that they had casted bogus votes as he was elected several times as member of the Pakistani parliament. A lady elected member from the Muslim League during the 1970 elections told Abdul Wali Khan that she alone had casted fifty one votes.<sup>127</sup> The *Pakistan Times* of 19<sup>th</sup> July 1947 reported that the electoral roll in the province was not been revised for a long time and even votes of those persons were also recorded who were already dead.<sup>128</sup> Moreover, the total population of the province was 3.5 million and only 572798 persons were given the right to vote.<sup>129</sup> The people of the adjacent six tribal area and four princely states were not included in the electoral process.<sup>130</sup> The population of the five settled districts, six tribal agencies and four states was more than seven million.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism*, 243

<sup>125</sup> Shah, *Muslim League*, 152

<sup>126</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 448

<sup>127</sup> Khan, Abdul Wali Khan, *Facts Are Facts: The Untold Story of India's Partition*, (Peshawar: Bacha Khan Trust, 2006), 166

<sup>128</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity*, 226

<sup>129</sup> Shalman, *Moulvi Fazal Mehmood Makhfi*, 135

<sup>130</sup> Ibid;

<sup>131</sup> Ibid; 136



Before the creation of Pakistan in August 1947, the withdrawal of the regular troops from the tribal area was discussed at the end of the world war in 1945 as the old policy of looking at the tribes as savages was going to change with a new approach as part of pacification. A Frontier Defense Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Major General Francis Toker in 1945 who after examining the new situation recommended reduction of troops and garrisons.<sup>132</sup> Cunningham although agreed with the recommendation of the committee but urged the need for having a political control over the tribes.<sup>133</sup> The governor was also aware of the political and constitutional changes in India and the Frontier.<sup>134</sup> However, the withdrawal was postponed at the time as it would unduly jeopardize morale of the Indian army and left for a suitable time.

In fact, the British authorities were supportive of the Muslim League and wanted it to have relationship with their brothers in faith rather than the Hindu dominated All India National Congress. Alliance of the Khudai Khidmatgars with the Congress was one of the reasons why the British did not like them and also played a role in the sabotaging the visit of Nehru and Khan Brothers through the tribal *maliks*. Otherwise tribal bonds of the Frontier tribes were much stronger than the Pakhtuns of the settled districts and the Khan Brothers particularly Abdul Ghaffar Khan was revered and every step of British oppression against the Pakhtuns in the districts was avenged by the tribes as was the case during the civil disobedience of 1930.

The British partiality towards the Muslim League can be gauged by the attitude of the governor Olaf Caroe and his political officers in the districts and tribal agencies. During the tour of Nehru to the province, he tried his best to stop him from visiting the Frontier and its tribal area. Caroe had accepted it a fact that the League rather than the Congress represented the Pakhtun political

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<sup>132</sup> Warren, *Waziristan*, 258

<sup>133</sup> Brandon Marsh, *Ramparts of Empire: British Imperialism and India's Afghan Frontier 1918- 1948*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 248

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid*; 249



feelings.<sup>135</sup> He was pressing the Viceroy for holding fresh elections and was ultimately removed by the Viceroy on the continuous criticism by the Khudai Khidmatgars. The Viceroy Mountbatten in order to know about the wishes of the tribesmen during his visit to the Frontier also visited Landi Kotal in Khyber Agency and met a tribal *jirga* of the Afridis who showed their willingness to work with the Muslim League rather than the Congress dominated by Hindus.<sup>136</sup> He also met the Wazir *jirga* the same day who expressed the same feelings. Although the Afghan government had been showing their concern for handing over the tribal area to Afghanistan as it belong to that country. However, the British authorities did not take their claim of the area as serious due to the fact that the British government had undertaken several agreements with the Afghan Amirs where these areas were recognized as under the control of the British despite the fact that the tribes were continuously fighting the *Raj*. The Afghan government however recognized those agreements as valid with the British and not its successor state and the matter became a cause of hostile relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan. In fact, the Afghan ruler have had taken the matter of the tribal areas as serious with the British and their support to some of the tribes was meant for having political support of the Frontier tribes for the Afghan rulers rather than their genuine desire for inclusion of the tribal territory into Afghanistan as the tribesmen were known as King makers and breakers. The Frontier tribes have always played an important role in determining who was to rule Afghanistan.<sup>137</sup> However, the Pakhtuns on Afghan side of the Durand Line also have had supported the Frontier tribes in their struggle against the British.

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<sup>135</sup> Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Pakhtuns*, 235

<sup>136</sup> Shah, *Ethnicity: Islam and Nationalism*, 213

<sup>137</sup> Fazalur Rahim and Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Afghanistan and the Frontier*, (Peshawar: Emjay Books International, 1993), 200



After referendum in the settled districts and the creation of Pakistan on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1947, the tribal *maliks* of the tribal areas showed their loyalty and sympathy with the new state of Pakistan contrary to the Afghan claim over the Pakhtun areas on British side of the Durand Line. Due to its semi autonomous character, the tribal areas were not made part of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 and left for the future government of Pakistan.<sup>138</sup> Governor Cunningham informed Jinnah on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1947 to deal with the Frontier tribes recommending the withdrawal of troops from the areas except in the headquarters of the tribal agencies and to come to a decision on the agreements with the tribes.<sup>139</sup> The Governor General of the new state of Pakistan, M.A. Jinnah accepted the semi autonomous character of the tribal territory with continued allowances and no modifications to the existing arrangements without their consent so long as they remained loyal to Pakistan in his meetings with the tribal *jirgas* in January and April 1948 at Bannu and Peshawar respectively.<sup>140</sup> The tribal territory was later on made an integral part of the federation of Pakistan by means of retrospective legislation with effect from 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947 with the notification of the governor general issued on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1950.<sup>141</sup> However, no serious attempt was made by the government of Pakistan to bring the Frontier tribes into the main stream which was the main objective of the Khudai Khidmatgars since the 1930s. Unfortunately, instead of working along with the real leaders of the land, the Muslim League leaders suppressed it by the use of force.

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<sup>138</sup> Sultan-i- Rome, *The North-West Frontier (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa): Essays on History*, (Karachi, Oxford University Press, 2013), 354

<sup>139</sup> IORL, Cunningham Diary 1947-1948, Mss Eur D670/6

<sup>140</sup> Naeemullah Khan, "Pukhtun Social Structure, Islam and Militancy in the Tribal Areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: An Analysis". *Pakistan Historical Society*, Vol. LXVI, Nos 1 & 2, (January-June, 2018), 207

<sup>141</sup> Rome, *The North-West Frontier*", 354



## **6.7 Dismissal of Dr. Khan Sahib's Ministry and Banning the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement**

The Muslim League leadership had earlier asked the Viceroy to order dismissal of the NWFP on 5<sup>th</sup> August. Liaquat Ali Khan had informed the Viceroy that Dr. Khan sahib ministry was intending to declare independent Pakhtunistan on 15<sup>th</sup> August.<sup>142</sup> However, the governor Lockhart was apprehensive of creating serious trouble and Cunningham also saw any dismissal on the part of the British government as unconstitutional because of the Congress majority in the assembly.<sup>143</sup> Cunningham writes that the matter was left for the Pakistani constituent assembly as it would be in a better position to pass special measures for solving the matter and they doubted Liaquat's information.<sup>144</sup> M.A. Jinnah in his two hours long meeting with Cunningham on August 10 stated that he would not be convinced by any kind of assurance by Dr. Khan Sahib about fair play with Pakistan. Jinnah alleged writes Cunningham that Dr. Khan could destroy the whole idea of Pakistan but without any evidence and justification. Cunningham left for Peshawar and met Dr. Khan Sahib on 13<sup>th</sup> August and asked about his rumors about declaration of independent Pakhtunistan. Cunningham writes that Dr Khan Sahib frankly told him that he had neither any intension of declaring any independent state nor would anything injurious to Pakistan's constitution and would give up in case he could not support any new constitution. However, the Muslim League leadership had the idea of framing a strong centralized constitution and could not think of tolerating any political pressure in the constitution making process.

After the referendum was over, the Khudai Khidmatgars had to adjust themselves with the new circumstances as the Congress ministry was in majority in the assembly but results of the plebiscite went in favor of Pakistan. Dr. Khan Sahib and the ministers were planning to attend

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<sup>142</sup> IORL, "Cunningham Diary 1947-1948", Mss Eur D670/6

<sup>143</sup> Ibid;

<sup>144</sup> Ibid,



the new Pakistani flag ceremony as he had assured Cunningham when asked that they would pull down the Congress flag after 14<sup>th</sup>. However, they could not participate in the ceremony on account of intelligence reports that the charged Muslim League guards would pull the flags from the cars of the ministers.<sup>145</sup> Moreover, the ministers were invited to attend the flag ceremony on 15<sup>th</sup> August but not asked to take oath of allegiance.<sup>146</sup> Dr. Khan Sahib and the ministers apprehended some foul play. Cunningham was although convinced that the ministry would not make any trouble or announcement of an independent Pakhtunistan, he however also hoped that the Dr. Khan Sahib would resign himself which did not take place. Regarding the absence of the ministers from the flag hoisting ceremony, Cunningham thought of the minister's calculations that if they attend the ceremony and were thereafter dismissed, their followers would laugh at them.<sup>147</sup> According to Cunningham, Khan Sahib would probably prefer to resign instead of dismissal but was overruled by Qazi Attaullah and Mehr Chand Khana who wanted to prove that M.A. Jinnah had taken an unconstitutional step. Cunningham who took oath as governor on 15<sup>th</sup> August trusted Dr. Khan Sahib and was in favor of keeping the ministry intact. A letter was also sent to Jinnah for the purpose but was not approved by the later by citing his own difficulties. Thereafter, after making some amendments to the Pakistan constitution legalizing the dismissal, Jinnah directed Cunningham to dismiss Khan's sahib ministry on 22<sup>nd</sup> August.<sup>148</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan's earlier meetings with M.A. Jinnah had proved that the later was not ready to give any kind of constitutional guarantee based on ethnic identity and geography of the Pakhtuns not to speak of independent Pakhtunistan as they not only had majority in the assembly but also large number of followers who had worked for independence of their homeland from the British. The

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<sup>145</sup> IORL, "Cunningham Diary 1947-1948", Mss Eur D670/6 Also see Parshotam, *The North West Frontier*, 206

<sup>146</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 450

<sup>147</sup> IORL, Cunningham Diary 1947-48, Mss Eur D670/6

<sup>148</sup> Ibid;



Khudai Khidmatgars had no intension of achieving Pakhtunistan through force or violence nor would Abdul Ghaffar Khan ever allowed it as he had adopted non violence as a creed rather than a political strategy.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the provincial Khudai Khidmatgars were clear from the beginning that the new state is going to be a theocratic state with authority vested in the center as it was exploiting religious feelings against future Hindu domination. Immediately after the appointment of Abdul Qayyum's Ministry, the Leaguers felt confident and started killing Hindus and Sikhs in retaliation of the Muslim's killings in East Punjab. In Peshawar city about hundred Hindus and Sikhs were killed by the Muslim League sympathizers in September 1947 who were confident that the police would not take action them.<sup>149</sup> Similarly, according to Cunningham, more than 150 Hindus were killed within two days in Nowshehra located at a distance of just few miles from Peshawar. The governor appreciated that there were no communal violence in district Bannu and the Hindus who were thousands in the city did not felt to be taken away to refugee camps. Interestingly, the governor writes that not a single Hindu or Sikh was molested or killed in the tribal area. The communal riots were happening in the settled districts where the Muslim Leaguers had a sizeable number. The start of religious militancy in the province was established and preferred over the secular approach of the Khudai Khidmatgars to politics as they were potential political rivals who were confident of winning again if there were general elections that was not allowed to happen for a long time after creation of the country.

The Khudai Khidmatgars being in majority in the assembly were initially in favor of an independent Pakhtunistan due to the fear of numerical and political domination of the Punjab. In case of failure in getting an independent state constitutionally, their next step was forming a

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<sup>149</sup> IORL, "Cunningham Diary 1947-1948", Mss Eur D670/6



federation of weak center with autonomous provinces. The Khudai Khidmatgars calculated that the new federation was going to have a strong center with weak provinces which was unacceptable to them. This is also clear from the fact that M.A. Jinnah was strongly opposed to a strong centralized state system that was based on India Act of 1935 and terming it a dangerous scheme with no room for regional autonomy. However, after creation of Pakistan, he not only adopted it as interim arrangement but made it more centralized and authoritarian with arbitrary powers immediately days after the creation of Pakistan.<sup>150</sup> The emergency powers of the Governor General were to expire after seven and a half months after the partition but he extended them by another year and section 92A was inserted in the act on 16 July, 1948 which gave the governor general more powers of directing the provincial governor to suspend the normal constitutional machinery on the plea of grave emergency.<sup>151</sup> In addition to holding three important positions of Governor General, president of the constitutional assembly and president of the Muslim League, he set a tradition by which a powerful individual came to be more important than the institutionalized distribution of state power.<sup>152</sup>

After Dr. Khan's ministry was replaced with Abdul Qaiyum's Muslim League ministry, a large gathering comprised of the Khudai Khidmatgars, many representatives of the Frontier tribes, the *Zalmy Pakhtun* (Young Pakhtun), and the parliamentary party gathered at Sardaryab and passed the following resolutions on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> September 1947.

“(a) The Khudai Khidmatgars consider Pakistan as their own country and pledge that they shall do their utmost to strengthen and safeguard its interests and make every sacrifice for the cause.

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<sup>150</sup> Adeel, Khan, *Politics of Identity: Ethnic Nationalism and the state in Pakistan*, (New Delhi: Saga Publications, 2005), 62

<sup>151</sup> Ibid;

<sup>152</sup> Ibid;



(b) The dismissal of the Khan Sahib's ministry and setting up of Qayyum's ministry is undemocratic, but as our country is passing through a critical stage, the Khudai Khidmatgars shall take no action which might create difficulties in the way of either the provincial or the central government.

(c) After creation of the country, the Khudai Khidmatgars sever their connection with the Indian National Congress Organization and therefore, instead of the tricolor adopt the Red Flag as the symbol of their own party.”<sup>153</sup>

At the same gathering, Abdul Gahffar Khan defined the demand of Pakhtunistan to mean full freedom for the Pakhtuns to manage their own internal affairs as a unit within the state of Pakistan. “This new state will be comprised of the six settled districts of the NWFP and all other contiguous areas inhabited by the Pakhtuns which may wish to join the new state of their own free will. This state will enter into agreement on defense, external affairs and communications with Pakistan.”<sup>154</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan stated that he had been working for unity of the Pakhtuns since 1929 when the Khudai Khidmatgar organization was formed and started campaign for educating and organizing the people for realization of his dream. According to Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars, Pakhtunistan would be an autonomous unit of Pakistan. On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1948, he attended the Pakistan constituent assembly and formally took oath of allegiance. Afterwards, he was invited for tea by M.A. Jinnah and embraced him by saying that, “today I feel that my dream of Pakistan is realized.” Abdul Ghaffar Khan also invited Jinnah to the Frontier which was accepted by the later for introducing him to the Khudai Khidmatgars. However, that did not materialize due to the propaganda of the provincial government. M.A. Jinnah excused from visiting Sardaryaab, center of the Khudai Khidmatgars on the pretext that other people would not like his unofficial visit and Abdul Ghaffar Khan was instead asked to merge his Khudai Khidmatgar organization with the Muslim League. On 5<sup>th</sup> March 1948,

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<sup>153</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 450-451

<sup>154</sup> Ibid;



delivered a speech in the constituent assembly and tried to remove misunderstanding about him and his Khudai Khidmatgar organization but could not succeed due to different political approaches of the new Pakistani rulers and the Khudai Khidmatgars. On 13<sup>th</sup> May 1948 Ghaffar Khan announced that he had decided to extend his Khudai Khidmatgar movement to all the areas of Pakistan together with progressive people of the country on non communal basis.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May, he attended another session of the constituent assembly and started a tour of the province educating and informing the people about the corrupt practices of the Muslim League politicians. However, he was arrested in Bahadar Khel near Kohat on 15<sup>th</sup> June while he was returning from his visit of district Bannu and was charged with ‘sedition’ and ‘intended collabouration with the Faqir of Ipi of Waziristan’. Ghaffar Khan termed it baseless charge and was asked by the deputy commissioner of Kohat to furnish assurance of good behavior for three years as required under section 40 of the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) which was rejected by the former as he had never given any assurance to the government during the British rule. He was awarded three years rigorous imprisonment and sent to Montgomery jail in West Punjab.<sup>155</sup>

Instead of negotiations and making compromises for accommodating valid demands and wishes of the real freedom fighters like the Khudai Khidmatgars who gave great sacrifices for the expulsion of the British from the sub continent were treated harshly than the British imperial power. The political opponents in the Frontier were charged with sedition and sent to jail under FCR of 1872. Instead of satisfying their voices, Ghaffar Khan and thousands of his non violent followers were arrested and were declared as agents and traitors thereby leaving a tradition which is still being used by the state authorities against the dissent voices and those demanding their legitimate rights.

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid; 465



On 8<sup>th</sup> July 1948, the Frontier Muslim League government assumed extraordinary powers to ban all organizations by ordinance which were objectionable to peace and security of the country. According to the local sources, hundreds of these Pakhtun freedom fighters were killed at Babra, Charsaada on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1948 when they were protesting peacefully for the release of their leaders while the official sources claim it to be fifteen dead and fifty injured. Thousands other were put into different jails for years by the new Muslim League ministry headed by Abdul Qayyum in the name security. Many men and women were humiliated by the Muslim League supporters and the headquarters of Khudai Khidmatgars at Sar-i- Daryab were blown up in the mid-September and the organization declared as unlawful by the provincial League government.<sup>156</sup> The Khudai Khidmatgars were striped; their beard and moustache were removed, thrown into dirty pools and were paraded naked in the villages before their women but did not resort to violence. Many prominent members of the Khudai Khidmatgars like Mian Jaffar Shah, Salar Mohammad Aslam Khan of Kohat, Arbab Abdu Rehman, Sahib Gul of Karak, Salar Yahqoob Khan of Bannu and others joined the Muslim League either because of the fear of Qaiyum Khan's ministry or having official recognition in the new set up which had weakened the movement further.<sup>157</sup> Abdul Ghaffar Khan was kept in prison for fifteen years out of the first eighteen years after independence.<sup>158</sup> At the end of his autobiography, he writes that "I am sorry that the Pakhtuns became slaves of those who were slaves of the British. They destroyed the Khudai Khidmatgar organization which we had established and developed by giving every kind of sacrifice, faced dangers and many difficulties just for organizing the people and achieving freedom."<sup>159</sup> According to Maulana Azad, the Muslim League became a dominant power in the

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<sup>156</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 467

<sup>157</sup> Akbar Khan. *Da Bar-i- Sagheer*, 304

<sup>158</sup> Ahmad, "Frontier Gandhi", 25

<sup>159</sup> Ghaffar. "*Zama Zhwand*", 588



new state of Pakistan whose leaders had given no sacrifice for freedom and most of them were either retired British officials or men who had been brought into public life with their help and patronage.<sup>160</sup> Sadly, the new rulers adopted the same British policies and continued suppressing political voices, ethnic identities and pluralism for the cause of evolving nationality based on Islam that ultimately gave rise not only to religious militancy but also Talibanization and degenerative socio- political and economic condition in the country. Unfortunately, the most affected of all those policies have been the Pakhtuns of the North-West Frontier of Pakistan and the area has been changed into hub of militancy.

The policy of the new Pakistani rulers towards the Khudai Khidmatgars was harsher than the British. The organization was banned at a time when the Pakhtun nationalist could have played a more constructive role in the new country. The treatment meted out to them was unmatched. Abdul Ghaffar Khan would have not only extended the Khudai Khidmatgar organization to the tribal areas of the Frontier but also the rest of Pakistan. On 13<sup>th</sup> May 1947, Abdul Ghaffar Khan had decided to extend his Khudai Khidmatgar organization to all the provinces of Pakistan.<sup>161</sup> In his speech in the Pakistani parliament on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1948, Abdul Ghaffar Khan said that:

“...We are blamed that the Khudai Khidmatgars do not allow the government to work out the constructive program, for such a program can only proceed when there is peace in the country. But we proclaim that if the government of Pakistan would work for our people and our country, the Khudai Khidmatgars would be with them. I repeat that I am not for destruction of Pakistan. In destruction lies no good for any one. There is advantage only in construction. I want to tell you categorically that I will not support anyone in

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<sup>160</sup> Azad, *India Wins Freedom*, 246

<sup>161</sup> Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 463



destruction. If any constructive program is before you, if you want to do something constructive for our people, not in theory but in practice, I declare before this house that I and my people are at your service.”<sup>162</sup>

The new rulers of the country particularly the newly appointed Chief Minister of the Frontier, Abdul Qaiyum dismantled the Khudai Khidmatgar organization and its leaders were sent to jails on the plea that they wanted to undone Pakistan. Resultantly, not only the people of the settled districts of NWFP were deprived of their popular leaders but also the Frontier tribes who could not openly interact with the Khan Brothers. The Khudai Khidmatgars could not interact with the people in the tribal area and were kept as separated as they were during the British rule in India. Moreover, Pakistan was created in the Islam and the *maliks* and *Mullahs* in the tribal areas wholeheartedly supported call of the Muslim League for a separate Muslim state thanks to the British provincial authorities. The tribal *maliks* and *Mullahs* declared their loyalty towards the new state of Pakistan who like the British did not try to bring the area under the Pakistani legal political system.

Result of banning the first ever non- violent organization and arresting popular leaders like Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgar leadership was that the spread of religious militancy in the tribal areas became very easy for the state authorities. The active role of Pakistan in the *Jihad* against Russians in Afghanistan in the 19880 and later support for the Taliban regime in the 1990s together with the religious leaders in the Frontier for achieving political objectives changed the Frontier tribes into hub of religious militancy and Talibanization. Similarly, the Malakand region particularly, the state of Swat where the Wali had been working for the British and against the Khudai Khidmatgars witnessed a religious movement for enforcing *Shariah* laws under the leadership of Sufi Muhammad in 1992 and a wave of

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid, 454



Talibanization in Swat under *Mullah* Fazlullah, leader of the *Tehrik-i- Taliban Pakistan* (TTP) who were defeated only after undertaking a large scale military operation by the Pakistani military in May 2009. On the contrary, the settled areas of the Frontier who were strong hold of the Khudai Khidmatgars have relatively remained peaceful and not easily prone to religious extremism. Had, the Khudai Khidmatgar organization not been banned and destroyed and its leaders imprisoned for many years, the situation in the NWFP (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and its tribal areas today would have been completely different.



## **Conclusion**

The North Western border region of British India or the present day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan and the adjacent Tribal area also known as the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) has played a significant role in the history of Indian sub-continent. The province is bounded by Hindu Kush range in the north. Baluchistan province lies to its South. To its east lies the province of Punjab and Kashmir. The Durand Line drawn by the British and the Afghan Amirs in 1893 separates it from Afghanistan in the west. The six settled districts of the province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and its adjacent tribal area have remained part of bigger areas what we call as Hindustan and Afghanistan. The people of this region have been socially and culturally close to the people living in Afghanistan due to their common origin, language, culture and religion.

The region has been inhabited by ninety three percent Pakhtuns since medieval times who were engaged with India for economic and political reasons. According to the 1941 census report, the tribal territory before departure of the British covered an area of 25, 000 square miles including the princely states of Dir, Swat and Chitral with an estimated population of 2,377,599 persons. The settled districts covered an area of 14,263 square miles with a population of 3,038,067. The total estimated area of the province including the tribal area is 39,900 square miles. However, the princely states and Malakand region has been merged with the Frontier province after the creation of Pakistan and the remaining area of the tribal territory has become 27220 Square Kilo meter or 3.4 percent of Pakistan's total land area. The total population of the remaining tribal area according to 1981 census is 21, 99,000 persons. The population rose to 2.8 million in 1998 which does not seem to be accurate. Currently, the population is unofficially estimated to be more than seven million.



Due to its strategic location, the area has been overrun by all the conquerors that came to India from Central Asia. In the process, the inhabitants of the region have reacted differently according to the situations of the time. While the socio- political conditions and economic considerations have led them to support and assist the invaders, the same people have resisted those invaders on their own homeland due to their love for independence. The British Indian rulers after occupying the North-West Frontier of India in 1849, treated it differently from the other Indian provinces and adopted different strategies for controlling its people. Instead of bringing together the settled districts and the adjacent tribal area, the British further divided it into five semi-autonomous tribal agencies of Malakand Agency (which includes the princely states of Dir, Swat and Chitral), Khyber Agency, Kurram Agency, North and South Waziristan Agencies giving them a semi-autonomous status.

Ruling the Pakhtuns in the settled districts was easy in comparison to the Frontier tribes who were more divided and intensely democratic in their nature. Moreover, the geographical difference between the two administrative areas was another reason for dealing with the tribes. Hence, the Pakhtuns of the districts succeeded in establishing a non-violent and constitutional organization in the shape of Khudai Khidmatgar organization. On the contrary, the Frontier tribes resisted the British rule militarily. This was the reason that the British had to keep over half of the Indian army in the Frontier for controlling the tribes during the First World War. It is noteworthy to mention that the political developments in India and Afghanistan have been influencing the North-West Frontier Province despite the fact that the British policy makers tried their best to keep the Frontier away from the mainstream Indian politics.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan popularly known as Bacha Khan was in contact with the *Ulema* of Deoband as well as the local prominent Pakhtun religious leaders since 1910 that were in search of a



suitable place in the semi-independent tribal area for waging a holy war against the British rule in India. Abdul Ghaffar Khan initially used to visit the tribal area during the First World War and assisted the *mujahidin* that shows that he was favoring and supporting armed resistance against colonialism. This was the time when the Afghan Amir Amanullah Khan mobilized the Pakhtun tribes on both sides of the Durand Line to raise in rebellion against the British. However, Abdul Ghaffar Khan after observing the disorganized tribes in the Mohmand tribal area, deplorable socio- political situation in the province, social evils and educational backwardness reached the conclusion that the first and major requirement of achieving freedom was the socio- political and educational reformation and unification of the Pakhtuns. His socio- political and educational steps developed into the creation of a constitutional political movement named as Khudai Khidmatgar in 1929 which spread rapidly and became popular throughout the North- West Frontier region.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the leadership of the Khudai Khidmatgar organization were busy in popularizing the movement in the rural population of the North-West Frontier by undertaking long tours in width and breadth of the province educating, reforming and preparing the people for a political struggle against the British Imperial power. Meanwhile, the Indian National Congress started a mass civil disobedience movement in March 1930 for *Swaraj* or complete independence. Owing to the popularity of Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier, the Congress provincial leaders requested Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his associates for help to which they agreed unconditionally. The civil disobedience initiated by the Congress, being the largest anti-British political party in India offered the Khudai Khidmatgars as a mean of achieving freedom from the British which was the main objective of the Pakhtuns. Hence, the movement was



carried on by joint struggle of the Indian National Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the province.

After arrest of the Congress leaders at the start of the civil disobedience on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1930, peaceful protest was started in Peshawar for releasing their leaders. However, the British authorities massacred more than two hundred peaceful protesters at Qissa Khwani Bazar on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The killings enraged not only the people of the settled districts rather the Frontier tribes as well who were moved by the British atrocities in the province over nonviolent freedom fighters. At the same time, hundreds of Pakhtun nationalists from Wazir and Bannuchi tribes of district Bannu were busy in popularizing the civil disobedience in Kohat, Bannu, D.I. Khan and indeed in the tribal agencies of Waziristan, Khyber and Mohmand. The authorities used every kind of force starting from wholesale arrests, mid night house searches, insulting the women and carrying luggage from the houses. The Qissa Khwani massacre was followed by mass killings of protesters in district Kohat and Bannu. The Killings of more than seventy protesters in Spin Tangi area of Bannu in August 1930 reached the tribal agencies.

Motivated by the nationalist feelings and strong tribal bonds, the major Frontier tribes like the Afridis of Khyber Agency, Wazirs and Mehsuds of Waziristan and the tribes of Mohmand area did not remain silent spectators to the atrocities of the British on these non violent protesters in the settled districts. They started attacking the British installations in their respective areas or along the administrative border with the settled districts. The British tried hard to stop message of the Khudai Khidmatgars across the administrative border and succeeded in keeping the independent tribes isolated from the movement in the strict sense of the word. The Afghan government under King Nadir Khan who was politically supported by the Khudai Khidmatgars and armed *Lashkars* of the Frontier tribes also played a negative role in minimizing the influence



of the movement by threatening the Afghan allowance receiving *maliks* in the agencies to be friendly with the British. However, the British could not stop the civil disobedience penetrating into the tribal area. The tribes however, reacted militarily to the crisis in the settled districts and fought the British throughout the 1930s thanks to the nationalist propaganda of the Khudai Khidmatgars. Moreover, due to the close relationship between the Khudai Khidmatgar organization and the Congress during the civil disobedience, the former was formally affiliated with the latter and Abdul Ghaffar Khan became a prominent member of the Congress Working Committee.

The British government in order to pacify the Indian nationalists implemented the Indian Act of 1935 for giving more representation to the Indians. At the same time, the British also ordered construction of roads in the tribal area and encroachment into the tribal agencies. The Khudai Khidmatgars and the Congress while expressing dissatisfaction over the Act also criticized the new Forward Policy of the British in the tribal area as they knew that tribes would react to it militarily which would be followed by heavy and indiscriminate bombing of the area. The major tribes of Mohmands, Wazirs, Mehsuds, Afridis and Bhattanis were more resistive as compared to other tribes of the Frontier. This was one of the reasons that those portions of these tribes who were residing on the administrative border with the districts joined the Khudai Khidmatgar organization in large numbers. The Wazir and Bannuchi Khudai Khidmatgars in district Bannu were in regular communication with the hostile leaders and *Lashkars* in Waziristan.

Owing to the oppressive policy of the government in the settled districts, presence of large number of British soldiers in the tribal area and bombing common villages as part of collective punishment by the Royal Air Force, construction of roads for communication and the occurring of religious events like demolition of Shaheedganj mosque in April 1936 and the matter of Islam



Bibi (a Hindu convert girl) led to the armed struggle by the Faqir of Ipi in Waziristan who started attacking British installations in the area. Due to heavy bombardment and large number of troops in Waziristan, it became difficult for the Faqir of Ipi to face the enemy on the ground. Every hostile attack of the tribes was avenged by bombing the common villages harboring the Faqir and his followers. Bombing and killing innocent people including women and children would further enrage the tribes who in turn started attacking British installations in the districts and kidnapping minorities in the adjoining districts of Bannu, D.I. Khan and Kohat either for ransom or releasing the tribal elders arrested in the tribal area. Interestingly, the Afghan rulers would try to stop the Pakhtuns on Afghan side of the border from joining the Faqir's *Lashkars* and convince the tribes to come to terms with the British.

The attacks of the tribal groups in the settled districts increased the communal situation in Bannu and D.I Khan in the aftermath of Islam Bibi's episode and the struggle became more a religious one rather than the growing discontent among the tribes. Resultantly, the new government of Dr. Khan Sahib who had assumed power in September 1937 was faced with law and order situation in the province. The Indian National Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars continuously criticized the British role and Forward Policy and held it responsible for the tribal incursions in order to malign the newly elected Congress ministry in the Frontier. However, the inclusion of India into the Second World War without consent of the Congress led to the resignations of the Congress ministries including the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier. The resignation of the Congress ministers in the Frontier proved a blessing in disguised and appointed a Muslim League ministry who were supporters of the British war efforts in the region.

When the Second World War in Europe began in September 1939, the biggest challenge for the British Indian authorities was keeping the North-West Frontier of India as quiet during the war



and away from influence of the Axis Powers. The Frontier and the tribes were considered as more prone to enemy propaganda by the British policy makers. For the British authorities, the best policy in the Frontier was an appeal to political Islam and propaganda through the local *mullahs* for having a common cause with the British against the Godless Soviets. The loyal *Khans* and the religious leaders successfully carried out the British propaganda against the Axis Powers and considered it as a service to Islam. After German's attack on Soviet Russia in 1941, the propaganda was diverted against the Germans, Italians, the Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier since the later two were against using the Frontier for any foreign war. Abdul Ghaffar Khan not only travelled throughout the province for preaching against the war but also sent various delegations of the Khudai Khidmatgars to the tribal area in 1942 for preaching unification of the Pakhtuns and to stay away from the war which was not their own and would prove destructive for them.

Meanwhile, the All India Muslim League was becoming a Muslim representative body in India and was at loggerheads with the Indian National Congress. The League which was previously unknown to the people of the Frontier started gaining ground in the province. After the passing of the Lahore Resolution on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1940, the big *Khans* and *Mullahs* were not only spreading religious propaganda in support of the war but also spearheading the movement for Pakistan in the Frontier. In the absence of Dr. Khan's ministry in the Frontier, a Muslim League ministry was installed in 1943 by the Governor, George Cunningham, consisted of big *Khans* who had lost their authority during the Congress ministry. The British policy of using the card of political Islam together with the *fatwas* issued by the *Mullahs* worked well in keeping the Frontier and the tribal area quiet albeit with a heavy financial cost. The success of the British in the war at the end of 1945 together with the Congress non-cooperation, Quit India movement in



August 1942 and demands of freedom from the Indians, the newly elected Labour government of Prime Minister Atlee announced general elections and hinted at giving more representation to the Indians in the government. All the Congress leaders who were arrested in 1942 during the “Quit India” movement were released in 1945 and started preparation for the next general elections.

In order to win the Muslim seats in the Muslim majority provinces during the next general elections which were going to be held in the start of 1946, the League adopted the same religious card of the British for winning support of the Indian Muslims for achieving Pakistan. The NWFP was a major challenge for the League as it was the only Muslim majority province with ninety three percent Muslims and crucial for the future Pakistan scheme. While the League worked well in other Indian provinces in the elections, it succeeded in capturing only seventeen out of fifty seats in the Frontier province. Resultantly, a Congress ministry under Dr. Khan Sahib was formed who had succeeded in getting thirty seats.

After the elections were over, the British government sent the Cabinet Mission to India who after holding discussions with the leaders of the All India Muslim League and the Indian National Congress suggested an interim government and grouping of the Indian provinces based on communal lines. Although both the political parties agreed to the Cabinet Mission Plan, the Congress president, Jawaharlal Nehru, issued a statement that the Congress could any time change the compulsory grouping of the provinces unilaterally, which alerted the Muslim League leadership. The Muslim League withdrawn its acceptance of the Plan and demanded that the Muslims would not be satisfied with any arrangement other than Pakistan. A “Direction Action Day” call in Bengal was given by M.A. Jinnah on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1946 that ultimately resulted in killing thousands of people from both the Hindus and the Muslims. Once the communal riots started, it spread in quantity and magnitude and continued even after the partition of India. M.A.



Jinnah also joined the interim government headed by Jawaharlal Nehru on the intervention of the Indian Viceroy. However, both the political parties worked in opposite directions. While the Congress was trying to keep the unity of India, the Muslim League tried its best to achieve Pakistan at any cost.

As part of propaganda for achieving Pakistan and maligning the Congress government, the Muslim League in the Frontier was propagating that the Hindus were responsible for the ongoing British bombing of the Mehsud villages in Waziristan. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars invited Jawaharlal Nehru being head of the government and man responsible for tribal affairs to visit the Frontier tribes as a good will and to counter the Muslim League propaganda that proved more fruitful to the later than the former albeit with support of the Governor Olaf Caroe and his political officers. Jawaharlal Nehru and the Khan Brothers were mistreated by the tribal *maliks* wherever they visited from Malakand to South Waziristan with the exception of Bittani area, *jandola* where the political agent was a Hindu. Jawaharlal Nehru and the Khan Brothers held the British responsible who had instructed the *maliks* for sabotaging the visit. Moreover, the Muslim League in order to gain sympathies of the Frontier Muslims undertook a wide spread religious propaganda through the *mullahs* who used to issue *fatwas* against the Khan Brothers for being friends of the Hindus and were demanding fresh elections in the province. Taking political advantage of the killings of Muslims in India, the provincial Muslim League leaders started a civil disobedience movement against the Frontier Congress ministry by exploiting religious feelings of the people that resulted in killing dozens of Hindu and Sikh minorities in district Hazara, Peshawar and D.I. Khan. Dr. Khan's ministry arrested the League leaders and workers charged with violence. The new Viceroy, Mountbatten appointed for transferring power to the Indians had to visit the province and observe the situation himself. At



his arrival in Peshawar, he was impressed by the demonstration of the Muslim League supporters and presented his plan on 3<sup>rd</sup> June for partition of India along with holding a referendum in the Frontier and division of Punjab and Bengal albeit with approval of the Congress Working Committee. Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Congress ministry after failing to include a third option of Pakhtunistan in the referendum boycotted it and the results went in favor of joining Pakistan albeit with foul play during the referendum. On 14<sup>th</sup> August, the first Governor General of Pakistan, M.A. Jinnah authorized the new Governor of the province, George Cunningham to ask for resignation of Dr. Khan's ministry and dismiss it in case of not resigning since they could not attend the flag ceremony due to fear of ill treatment of Muslim League National Guards based on intelligence reports. Being an elected government, Dr. Khan's ministry refused to resign but dismissed on 23<sup>rd</sup> August which was termed as the first undemocratic and unconstitutional step of M.A. Jinnah and the Muslim League. M.A. Jinnah also held *jirgas* with the *maliks* of the tribal area who showed willingness for joining Pakistan. In 1950, the tribal area was declared as part of Pakistan through retrospective legislation since 1947 by the notification of the governor general. However, successive governments did not try to bring it into the mainstream which had been a long standing demand of the Khudai Khidmatgars and resultantly the tribal area was changed into hub of militancy due to strategic policies of the state.

The Khudai Khidmatgars after their dismissal from the government passed resolutions on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> September 1947 declaring Pakistan as their own country with full provincial autonomy and a loose center having defense, communication and external affairs responsibility. Abdul Ghaffar Khan formally took oath of allegiance to the new state in February 1948 with appreciation from M.A. Jinnah during the session of the Constituent Assembly. During another session of the assembly in March, Abdul Ghaffar Khan redefined his conception of Pakhtunistan and its



relationship with Pakistan based on equality, equity and brotherhood and also stressed on serving the people in the real sense of the word. However, he along with thousands of freedom fighters were declared as traitors and kept behind bars for years thus leaving a wrong tradition of silencing voices raised for legitimate rights and educating the people for political struggle. Hundreds of peaceful protesters at Babra, Charssada were killed on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1948 demanding release of their leaders and workers. The headquarters of the Khudai Khidmatgars at Sar-i-Daryab were destroyed and the movement declared as illegal in mid-September by the provincial government under Abdul Qaiyum. After declaring the real freedom fighters as agents and traitors, the rulers developed a centralized political state system and continued the use of Islam for evolving a common sense of identity and achieving political objectives at home and abroad. While the non- violent Khudai Khidmatgar organization was banned and its leaders put behind bars, the religious forces have been given free hand by the Pakistani policy makers that have ultimately changed the political and socio- economic condition of the North- West Frontier and the tribal area. Like the British, the Pakistani ruling elite used the tribal area of the Frontier as a base for training, weaponizing and supporting the *Mujahiddin* groups against the Russians in Afghanistan during the Afghan *jihad* in the 1980s. After the emergence of Taliban in the 1990s, the Pakistani decision makers continued their support for the Taliban regime in Afghanistan that led to the tragic incident of 9/11 in the United States. After the US led invasion of Afghanistan, most of the Taliban and *Al- Qaida* operatives took refuge in the tribal area and changed it into hub of militancy and extremism.

Interestingly, the areas where the Khudai Khidmatgars both before and after the partition of India were allowed to spread the message of peace and non- violent constitutional struggle have relatively less affected by the spread of religious militancy and Talibanization. On the other



hand, the tribal agencies and the state of Swat where the Khudai Khidmatgars were not allowed to preach during and after the British withdrawal from India, have been easily influenced and prone to the state sponsored religious extremism with the help of tribal loyal *maliks* and *Mullahs*. This was the reason that Abdul Ghaffar Khan had been struggling against the use of Islam for vested interest. Had the Khudai Khidmatgar organization not been banned and its leaders kept in prisons for long, the situation in the North- West Frontier and the tribal area would have been peaceful. Sadly, neither the British allowed them to preach for civil liberties and political rights nor the Pakistani authorities allowed them to do so.



## Appendix 1

### اعلان

ھر کله چہ حکومت ستاخو کلو زرم اپږو او اسماعیل خیلو ته نقصان او رسو او تاخو لوہی مناسبا سزا درکړه - له دی وجہی نه په دی دواړو کلو باندی د فوری زیاتی بمباری د بندولو حکمونہ یی جاری کړی دی - په دی وجہ تاخو دی کلو ته واپس راتلے شی - تاخو یوخل بیا اکماہ کولے شی چہ ناچا و دلو بمونو باندی لاس مه لکوي - لکه چہ د اویزیات خطرناک دی - او دی د چا و د لوهرخت ویرہ دی تاریخ ۱۳ مارچ ۱۹۳۶ء مطابق ۲۹ ذوالحجہ ۱۳۵۵ھ

په حکم د سرکار عالیہ

### اعلان

چونکہ حکومت نے تمہارے دیہات زرم اپږو اور اسماعیل خیل کو نقصان پہنچا کر تمہیں مناسب سزا دیدی ہے۔ لہذا اب ان دونوں دیہات پر مزید بمباری بند کرنے کے احکام صادر کر دئے گئے ہیں۔ اس لئے آپ لوگ ان دیہات میں واپس آ سکتے ہیں۔ تم کو ایک بار پھر متنبہ کیا جاتا ہے کہ جو بم پھٹے ہوئے نہ ہوں ان کو ہاتھ نہ لگاؤ۔ کیونکہ یہ حد درجہ خطرناک ہیں۔ اور ان کے پھٹ جانے کا ہر وقت احتمال ہوتا ہے۔

مورخہ ۱۳ مارچ ۱۹۳۶ء مطابق ۲۹ ذوالحجہ ۱۳۵۵ھ

بحکم سرکار عالیہ



عصر کی

پہ نامہ د اوسید و تکیو پسل کو تب ، ارسل کو تب ، کل ضمیر کو تب اوتنتی کلی اود نوہ کو تو نو چہ د ارسل کو تب نہ بد درے میلہ حد کتب دتند دتند پرتہ دی ۔

ہر ملک چہ اس کو آپر چاہیہ عمدہ مخالف شکوہ جمع کید و اود سکار بوجلات دتور قسم کار وانی دپار استعمال کیگی دد وچہ نہ کید  
 دایضہ کویڈ چہ ہر شوک داسل کو کور دتور میلہ نہ دتور تہ کین کدا انیلید ویاڈ او سید و شرمع کری۔ دد کویڈ د علی کار وانی کد  
 حکومت فیصلہ کویڈ چہ ہر ہفتہ تمام حلقہ کد کو مچہ د خالی پیر و شہر چہ ۱۳ مارچ ۱۹۳۴ء مطابق ۲۹ ذوالحجہ ۱۳۵۲ء د خیرتہ  
 د پیر تہ کین بیا موکشی دھوانی ہنر و نویدر لیکر کولہ باری او کری۔ دالمہد پیر شہد او ویر چاری وی۔ ترہفہ و شہر پور چہ حکومت تہ داسلی  
 ماصلہ شی چہ اوس داسر تہ د کھان لیکر د جمع کید و یاد دتور سے مخالف کار وانی دپار نہ استعمال کیگی۔  
 تا خود خیل خان اوستا خود بنہ شلوچ او حار و و د کچا و دپار تا خود داجلا ع ہمہ در کولیشی چہ تا سونور ا دد غہ کور  
 دتہ بر فور اوزہ سے او ترہفہ و شہر چہ تا خود داسر کاد طرف نہ دا خبر دس او نہر سی چہ اوس یخ ویرہ باقی پاتے نہ شہر  
 موچہ غہ خلیکین دتہ پیر شہر تہ کین مدد ا خلیکے۔

تا تو یہ خاص طور سے آگاہ کئے گئے تھے کہ کومبوہ نہ چہ چاؤدلی نہ روی ہفتہ نہ ہیچو لاس مہ کلوئے۔ تم کہ چہ دا خطرناک ہے چہ کچاؤدلوئے ہر وقت ویرا شستہ خواہ کہ دیتہ لاس او کولیشی او کہ او نہ کولیشی، یہ حکم کس کارعانی

اعْلَان

نام باشند۔ گانہ پسلی کوٹ۔ ارسل کوٹ۔ محل تعمیر کوٹ۔ ٹیٹی سکھ۔ اور دیگر کوٹ بائے جو ارسل کوٹ سے تین میل کے فاصلہ کے اندر واقع ہیں۔

چونکہ ارسل کوٹ اور گردونواح کے علاقہ کو مخالف لشکر کے متح کرنے کیلئے اور سرکار کے برخلاف دیگر کارروائی کرنے

کے لئے استعمال کیا جا رہا ہے۔ اس لئے حکومت نے فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ وہ ہر شخص کو ارسل کوٹ سے تین میل کے اندر رقبہ میں داخل ہونے

سے یا اس میں رہائش کرنے سے روکے۔ اس فیصلہ کو علی جامہ پہنانے کیلئے حکومت نے فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ تمام ان اشخاص پر جو

ہفتہ مورخہ ۱۳ راج ۱۹۳۷ء مطابق ۲۹ ذوالحجہ ۱۳۵۵ھ بعد دوپہر اہل قبہ میں پائے جایش یدریہ ہوائی جہاز حملہ آور ہو کر انہیں بمباری کی گئی

یہ حملہ دزات جباری رہیگا۔ تاوقتیکہ حکومت کو یہ تسلی نہ ہو جائے کہ اب اس رقبہ کو کسی مخالف کارروائی کیلئے استعمال ہر نہیں والا۔

اپنے اور تمہاری عورتوں۔ بچوں اور مال پریشانی کے بچاؤ کیلئے تمہیں یہ اطلاع دیکھنی ہے کہ تمہارا رشتہ مذکورہ سے بالکل جاؤ۔ اور تواتر چکا کہتے

کی طرف سے یہ مطلع نہ پہنچے کہ اب کی خطہ باقی نہیں رہا۔ تم اس دعبہ کے اندر کسی صورت میں داخل نہ ہو۔

بہتیں خصوصیت سے متنبہ کیا جاتا ہے۔ کہ نہ چھپٹے ہوئے بچوں کو ہرگز ماتھ نہ لگائیں۔ کیونکہ یہ خطرناک ہے جن کے ہیٹ جانے کا سہ وقت غلط ہوگا۔

جے۔ خواہ انہیں لائق نگاہا جائے یا نہ ؟



## Appendix 3

پہ حکم دے کر کار عالیہ

بحکم سرکار عالیہ



## Appendix 4

STRICTLY SECRET

### PROPAGANDA THROUGH MULLAHS.

In May 1941, I started a scheme for doing propaganda through Mullahs, both in the districts and in tribal territory. The general theme of propaganda is on ordinary Islamic lines, viz. the danger to Islam from Germany, tyrannical Nazi methods in occupied countries, etc.

E. I have not been in touch with any of the smaller Mullahs myself. I have done it through the following agents, with whom practically all my connections have been verbal; as little is put on paper as possible:

(a) GHULAM HAIDER of Sheraga.

On 28th May he told me that he thought he could work through about 9 or 10 Mullahs, including those of the following villages:

Razzar,  
Kot,  
Tarnab,  
Tangi (through a third party),  
Utmanzai, and  
Umarzai.

I told him that the best plan would be to call each Mullah in separately and secretly, tell him that he wanted him to do the right kind of religious propaganda, pay him, say, Rs.40/- or 50/-, and tell him to come back in 4 months' time and report what he had done, i.e. giving him a hint that he would get another reward then. GHULAM HAIDER agreed, except that he said he thought it would be safer to make some of the less reliable Mullahs come once a month and report, reducing the reward proportionately. I agreed.

I paid him Rs.600/-.

On 14th July he told me that he was doing propaganda through 9 Mullahs of the Charsadda - Tangi - Doaba area. The most useful and the most important is Sahib-i-Haq of Razzar; next to him are Hamdila of Prang, and Khadim of Charsadda. He said that so far they were preaching on the theme that Government had never interfered with religion, and that any troubles



troubles in Iraq had been the Iraqis own fault. He said he was doubtful about the line to take re. Russia, and I said the general theme should be that Islam does not approve of the general principles of Bolshevism or Communism, but that anyone who fights the Germans at the present time is the friend of Government and is to be commended.

(b) LUKANDAH MIRZA.

He gave me a list of Mullahs in Peshawar, Charsadda and Nowshera Tehsils (which is attached - Appendix "A"). I told him to go ahead with these on the same lines as GHULAM HAIDER above. I, however, told Ghulam Haider to consult with the Deputy Commissioner whether the names for Charsadda Tehsil were not too much in one area (Doaba).

He told me on 18th June that he had several Mullahs in touch with him.

I paid him Rs.1000/-.

At his suggestion I have seen the Manki Mullah, who seems ready to do whatever we want.

(c) HAZRAT ALI, Wazir-i-Azam of Swat.

I asked him to work in Mardan and Ranisai. I paid him Rs.1000/-, and told him to tell the Political Agent and the Wali, but nobody else.

P.A.Malakand told me on 10th June that the Wazir-i-Azam could extend his work to Buner and Swat, but anticipated difficulty in Bajaur, where owing to the activities of Badshah Gul and the Faqir of Alingar a strong anti-Government element already existed.

On the 1st August the Wazir-i-Azam sent me a list of Mullahs through whom he is working; he is paying them on an average about Rs.15/- p.m. each (cf. Appendix "B").

I am sending P.A. Malakand another Rs.1000/- for the Wazir-i-Azam, and have told him to tell the latter that he can work to a rough average expenditure of Rs.300/- per mensem, i.e. 20 Mullahs @ Rs.15/- p.m. each. He has discretion to modify this slightly



slightly if he thinks fit. The Wasir-i-Azam says he thinks the scheme is going very well at present.

(d) SHAIKH MAHJIB ALI for Kohat.

I have had no report from him yet, but I know he is doing something.

(e) COX for Bannu.

He is at present working through Nawab Zafar Khan and Tej Ali (s/o K.N. Ghulam Haider Khan of Bazar Ahmed Khan). I told him that I doubted whether either of them was really suitable, but told him to continue to do this and let me know. I have had no further report.

(f) MOHD ASLAM (D.C., D.I.K.).

He said he would try to work through the Faqir of Amu Khel, the Pir of Musassai, and the Pir of Zakori.

On 22nd June I paid him Rs. 600/-, i.e. Rs. 200/- for each, with hints of more to come if they did well.

(g) Syed ABDUL JABBAR SHAH of Bithora.

On 23rd June I asked him to see what contacts he could make in Yusufzai country and Bajaur. He said that he would do this work partly because Hyderabad (or at least the Muslim element there) wants him to consolidate Muslim opinion in North India in favour of Hyderabad.

Sir Akbar Hydari knows what he is doing.

On 18th July ABDUL JABBAR told me that he had started working through Abdul Hakam, the son of the late Badshah of Bam Khel, and his brother Abdul Shakur. He has also sent his cousin, Mohd Rasul, to Bajaur, but has not yet heard what he can do there.

ABDUL JABBAR said that he had written to Sir Akbar Hydari saying that he presumed Hyderabad would give him money for this propaganda.

I have so far paid him nothing.

(h) BACON for Afridis.

He told me that he was trying to work through one or two Mullahs, but I have had no further report from him.



(4) Maulvi BARKATULLAH, Mulshid of Asma.

My arrangement up till now with him has been that he comes to see me once or twice a year, and I pay something on each occasion. This was mainly to keep him sweet in case of necessity.

About nine months ago I told him that I wanted him to do something more positive. He says he has done a certain amount, and could do more. I therefore told him to do all that he could with the Babra Mullah (Gul Sahib), who is at the moment antagonistic to Badshah Gul, and would be an offset against him in the event of Badshah Gul giving trouble. BARKATULLAH said he would do this, and could also do a good deal through perhaps 10 or 12 Maulvis in different places throughout Bajaur and Mohmand country. I told him to report to me either verbally or by letter in about two or three months' time how far he had been successful. I told him to let me know the names of the people through whom he is working.

I paid him Rs.1000/-.

I have had no further report from him, but I gather that he and ABDUL JABBAR SHAH are now working as a pair in this matter.

5. I have now written to all the foregoing agents (except ABDUL JABBAR SHAH and BARKATULLAH, whom I shall speak to verbally) and asked that they should deal with you direct, and that you will co-ordinate the whole thing for me. I think it is much better that you should do this, if you don't mind, as it will ensure co-ordination, which I think is very important.

(Sd) G. Cunningham.

4/8/41,  
Governor.

Major Robinson,



## Appendix 5

### Appendix 'A'

#### List of Mullahs

##### Peshawar Tehsil.

1. Mavlana Qul Faqir Ahmed, near old Khyber Hospital.
2. Hafiz Ali Ahmed, Pipalwail mosque, inside Khabuli Gate.
3. Sahibzada Muhammad Ayub Deobandi of Muzammar.
4. Ghulam Habbani Shah, Police Line mosque.
5. Syed Habib Shah of Muzammar.
6. Hakim Abdul Deyan of Muzammar.
7. Tahir Mullah of Garhi Surad Khan.
8. Mullah Abdullah Jan of Pakee.
9. Abdullah Shah of Lal Kuti Khurd, Peshawar Cantonment.
10. Haji Fazli Samdani, Sadras Rafiul Islam, Muzammar.
11. Saaduddin of Dehbadur Kili.
12. Saad Akbar of Pushti Khara Poyan.
13. Minhajuddin of Shikhan.
14. Karti Ruknuddin of Kogwalle.
15. Mohd Usar of Shikhan.
16. Sultan Sahib of Garhi Hamra.
17. Taim Khan of Dehbadur.
18. Abdullah, Fasil Deobandi of Jetti Bala.
19. Abdur Rauf of Gulistan.
20. Abdul Qayum of Agre Khana.
21. Faqir Mullah, Imam Masjid Chak Jehangirpura.
22. Hafiz Ali Ahmed of Mohalla Har, Peshawar City.
23. Maulvi Abdul Qadir of Sirki Gata, Peshawar City.
24. Sahibzada Asimur Rahman of Deh Badadur.

##### TAMBI CHARSADIA.

1. Sahib-i-Haq of Basser.
2. Fazal Habbani of Mathra.
3. Samiul Haq of Terkha.
4. Abdul Haq Mohiddin of Mathra.
5. Ali Jan Khan of Yaghband.
6. Obaidullah of Kangra.
7. Nazir Hussain of Atoki.
8. Sahib Haq of Mirso.
9. Haji Fazal Qadir of Jummot.
10. Mir Ahmed Shah of Gulebad.
11. Samdani Sahib of Babra.
12. Rahmuddin of Prang.
13. Kebul Mullah of Tangi.

##### NOWSHERA TAMBI.

1. Amin-ullah-Hassanot, Mullah of Manki (Biggest Mullah in the District).
2. Mullah Shakhirullah of Nowshera.
3. Eldest son of Haji Sahib of Akora.

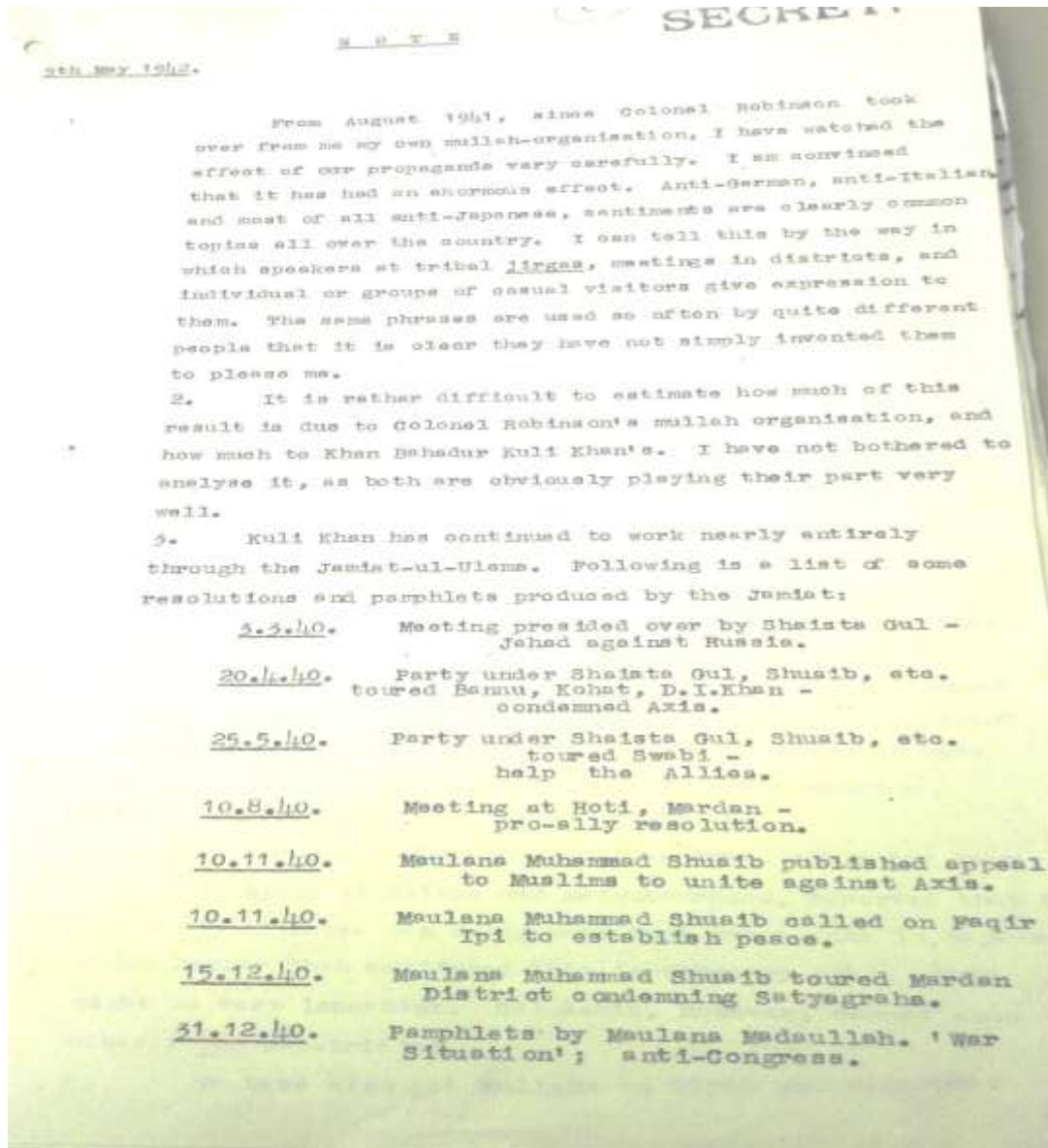


Appendix 'B'.

1. Qazi Asmatullah of Maneri Payan, Tehsil Swabi.
2. Maulvi Mohd Faruq of Maneri Payan, Tehsil Swabi.
3. Maulvi Hadrat Shah of Kunda, Tehsil Swabi.
4. Maulvi Abdur Rauf of Kaddi, Tehsil Swabi.
5. Sahib-i-Haq Sahib Fazel Haq of Rashekai, Tehsil Swabi.
6. Qazi Asanullah of Dagi, Tehsil Swabi.
7. Maulvi Sahib Gul of Pursulli, Tehsil Swabi.
8. Toti Bacha Sahib-i-Haq of Asota, Tehsil Swabi.
9. Maulvi Abdul Wahid of Yar Hussain, Tehsil Swabi.
10. Qazi Ali Hajar of Mardan.
11. Maulvi Zainullah of Gujar Garhi, Mardan.
12. Sahib-i-Haq Abdul Khaliq of Garhi Kapura, Mardan.
13. Maulvi Shaista Gul of Matto, Mardan.
14. Maulvi Hakim Abdul Halim of Ossi, Rustam.
15. Qazi Abdur Rauf of Niwi Killi - Sudhom (Rustam).
16. Maulvi Mohd Shuaib of Lundkhowar, Mardan.
17. Maulvi Madarulla of Lundkhowar, Mardan.
18. Maulvi Abdul Hanan of Mardan.



## Appendix 6





- 15. Shahid. Pamphlet by Maulana Madanullah addressed to IFT.
- 16. Shahid. Pamphlet by Maulana Madanullah - anti-Italian.
- 17. Shahid. Pamphlet by Maulana Madanullah - 'Ain-ul-Jihad' - Islamic duty against aggressors.
- 18. Shahid. Pamphlet by Maulana Muhammad Ahmad Khan against 5th Column.
- 19. Shahid. Pamphlet by Maulana Muhammad Ahmad Khan - 'Ashraf-i-Haq' against disturbances in West Pakistan.
- 20. Shahid. Pamphlets by Maulana Madanullah re. Iran and Iraq.

4. In the late summer of 1941, we tried to check up on the effect of our propaganda by getting informers to spy on Maulvi preaching in mosques. The results were most encouraging. For example, on the Id-ul-Zuhra, on 29.12.41, informers reported no less than 17 speeches in Peshawar District at which Islamic preaching was mixed with good strong stuff against the Japanese, and pro the British.

5. In December 1941, a party of the leading Khattak Mullahs toured through Southern Peshawar District, preaching that it was a Muslim duty to fight for the British.

6. Syed Abdullah Shah, President of Idah-ul-Muslimin, and editor of the Al-Falah, Maulvi Abdul Jabbar, Abdullah Deobandi, Hidayat Rasul, and others made effective speeches on China Day, 7th March 1942.

7. All the foregoing, also Maulvi Sami-ul-Haq, Muhammad Yusuf Deobandi, Sahib-i-Haq, Swat Mullah of Deh Bahadur, and others have been constantly reported by informers to have made good Islamic and anti-Axis and Japanese speeches, particularly on the Id and other festivals.

8. In December 1941, Abdul Jabbar Shah, returning from a longish spell at Sitana and neighbourhood, reported that Gul Sahib of Babra was doing anti-Nazi propaganda in Bajaur. Abdul Jabbar Shah confirmed this in February 1942. This might be very important. Gul Sahib, however, cannot show himself too pro-British.

9. We have also got Mullahs in Tirah and Mingrehar



thinking the right stuff.

10. Sher Ali, Hakim-i-Azam of Swat, is doing excellently in Swat and Buner; he uses Pir Baba Khatun. Also Ghulam Haider of Shoppa in his area.

11. Maulvi Abdul Qayyum of Agre Khana (a Congressite) has been useful lately - for Rs.200/- &

12. Barkatullah Mujahid of Chakarkand has done some useful anti-Nazi propaganda in Dajour; in December 1941, he wrote to me from Chakarkand that he wanted to start a 'Jahid-ul-Islam-i-Darud', but I thought this was mainly an attempt to get more money, and I did not encourage him.

13. The Faqir of Ans Khel (Dera Ismail Khan) and Pir of Khunzel (Dera Ismail Khan) were doing good work in cold weather 1941-42. The latter came to see me once in Peshawar - a unique honour, I believe & Sher Ali has been working these two well, also the Tajori Pir. Efforts were started to influence the Ghilzai Mullahs. We have got some working for us now - also a Mullah inside Powindah Gate, Dera Ismail Khan, who has an influence over the Powindahs. Sher Ali also saw the Pir of Teunsa in January and made arrangements with him (Unfortunately, the Pir is now being tried on a criminal charge &); Sher Ali has also got the Afghan Trade Agent, Parachinar, to promise to help us. Nur Hassan of Inzeri, the "Qari Sahib" (Pesh Imam of the Sunni Mosque at Parachinar), Khudai Nizar (Para Chankenni Mullah) and some Khoist Mullahs are also helping in the Kurram area.

14. About the end of December 1941, the Faqir of Shewa, with whom I have been in friendly relations for some years, told Laiq Shah (our agent) that the Qian Mullah, Qhaxi Mullah and some others had agreed at Darra Khela with the Faqir of Ipi that they should help the British Government, and not the Germans, in case of war. I wonder & But other people have told me this independently.

This may be the result of our propaganda that the only answer of Islam to the Japanese is Jihad. This is an



The following is an index of the people whom I have paid, or am still paying, for doing propaganda. The suggestions which I received, when he handed over the work to me, are at pages 1 and 2. I have gradually cut out some of them, and have added, I think, one more. I would be inclined to go on reducing gradually.

1. HAFID AHMED JAFAR (son of HAFID)	paid Rs.200/- on 10.1.40	to last up to 31.12.40	page 20.
2. STAVELAR, Every 1000/-	Rs.1000/- 6.7.40	and of 1000/- 1940	21.
3. HANAYULLAH of Amara	Rs.1000/- 12.11.40	annual payment	22.
4. Swaidan of DAN KHIL	Payment ceased 11.1.40	reason at p.	23.
5. Maulana KUTUB KHAN } Maulana HUSAIN KHAN } Maulana ABID KHAN }	Rs.200/- 18.10.40		24.
6. Malik KHAN of Amara	Rs.100/- p.w. paid up to end of Feb 1940		25.
7. HAFID ALI, (son of HAFID)	Rs.200/- 12.11.40	and of Feb 1940	26.
8. Malik AYUB of Shakh Khil	Payment ceased 24.4.40		27.
9. PIR HAFID	Payment ceased 17.5.40		28.
10. K.B. HANAY ALI	Payment ceased 20.6.40		29.
11. K.B. KULI KHAN	Rs.200/- monthly as from 1.11.40		30.
12. K.B. GHANAM HAFID of Shergarh	Payment ceased 25.10.40		31.
13. MULAN Sahib Bha	Rs.200/- or Rs.250/- every 2 months (one instalment due when he next calls)		32.
14. Maulvi Abdul Aziz of Fabbal	Rs.50/- when he calls next.		33.
15. P.A. CUTHWAE (Mr. Curtis)	Rs.1000/- monthly. paid up to November 1940 (7)		34.
16. K.B. MUHAMMAD HANAY	(a) Kurram ... Rs.5,000/- annually (b) North-West Frontier ... 12,000/- annually (c) Chitral ... 4,000/- annually		35.

26/2/40,

F. O'Leary,



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